

'SIMPLICITY' AND 'SILENCE' IN CHINESE BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS (Regulation 6.9)

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The Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna were the two main schools of Buddhism in India. The former taught in simple and easily understood language, making use of negative terms and repetitive argument, whilst the latter was rich in literary imagination and scholasticism.

When Buddhism first came to China (58-75 AD), it was expressed in borrowed ideas and terminology from the teaching of Huang-Lao. From about 200 AD it began to rely on the ideas and terminology of Taoism. It was not until the beginning of the fifth century that the true principles of Buddhism were expressed in Chinese by the Chinese themselves.

The confusion which had been created in people's minds by the borrowed ideas and terminology was largely dispelled by 'The Book of Chao', which was written from 404 to 414 AD. Using only about one thousand words, Seng-chao, the author, demonstrated the whole principle of 'Emptiness' of the Prajñā Sūtras which consist of six hundred large volumes, and Seng-chao was greatly admired by his Indian master Kumārajīva. Seng-chao abandoned the former reliance on Taoist ideas and terminology and did not employ the Indian analytical mode of expression but expressed the original meaning in a more concise way. The original thought of Prajñā was thus expressed in Chinese for the first time, and for the first time Chinese culture accepted and absorbed a foreign philosophy. The Chinese transformed the complex mode of expression of another country into a simple one of their own whilst still conveying the spirit of the original. Seng-chao's preference for 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' became the model for Chinese Buddhist writing and speech.

The elements of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' in the sutras were skilfully developed. These qualities came to be the outstanding characteristics of Chinese Buddhist thought. Seng-chao, Tao-sheng, Chih-i, and others, revealed in their teachings and daily lives a preference for 'simplicity' and 'Silence', e.g. the emphasis on the practice of concentration or meditation in the T'ien-t'ai, the Hua-yen and the Pure Land schools; the rejection, by Chinese culture, of the Fa-hsiang School (which had clung to Indian complexities of speech and thought).

Hui-neng, the sixth patriarch of the Ch'an School ("Ch'an", known as "Zen" in Japanese) developed these qualities even further. His teaching technique, the 'Thirty-six Pairs of Opposites', was a means of dispelling attachments from the mind. By this method the Mind and the object on which it concentrated correspond to each other, transcending all words and speech, and so Enlightenment is silently and instantaneously achieved. This method was derived from Prajñā thought, which also aimed to dispel attachment, but was also inspired by Confucianism and Taoism, which naturally preferred 'Simplicity', 'Silence' and moral practice within the Mind.

Traditional Chinese thought emphasised practice and experience as against knowledge and theory. Chinese Buddhism, the Ch'an School in particular, emphasised practice within the Mind. The characteristics of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' in Chinese Buddhism thought thus reached their full development in the teaching of the Ch'an School.

To Ven, Sing-Chee - my Mother Superior
without whose aid and encouragement
this work would never have been written

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CHRONOLOGY (OF DYNASTIES)

Emperor Yao	(Legendary)	3rd millennium B.C.		
Emperor Shun	(Legendary)	3rd millennium B.C.		
Hsia)		2183-1752 B.C.?		
Shang)	(Three Dynasties)	1751-1112 B.C.	(or 1765-1112 B.C.)	
Chou)		1111- 249 B.C.	(or 1027- 249 B.C.)	
			Spring and Autumn ..	722-481 B.C.
			Warring States (480-)	403-222 B.C.
Ch'in	(255 B.C.-)	221- 206 B.C.		
Han	B.C.	206- 220 A.D.	Western (Former) Han	
			B.C.	206- 8 A.D.
			Hsin	9- 23 A.D.
			Eastern (Later) Han	25-220 A.D.
Wei		220-265 A.D.	Three Kingdoms	{ Wei 220-265 Shu 221-263 Wu 222-280
Chin		265-420	Western Chin	265-317
			Eastern Chin	317-420
S. and N. Dynasties		420-589		
South			North	
Liu Sung		420-479	Later (North) Wei	386-535
Southern Ch'i		479-502	Eastern Wei	534-550
Liang		502-557	Western Wei	535-556
Ch'en		557-589	Northern Ch'i	550-577
			Northern Chou	557-581
Sui		581-618		
T'ang		618-907		
Five Dynasties		907-960		
			Later Liang	907-923
			Later T'ang	923-936
			Later Chin	936-947
			Later Han	947-950
			Later Chou	951-960
Liao (907-)		947-1125		
Sung		960-1279	Northern Sung	960-1126
			Southern Sung	1127-1279
Hsi-hsia		990-1227		
Chin		1115-1234		
Yüan (Mongol)	(1206-)	1271-1368		
Ming		1368-1644		
Ch'ing (Manchu)		1644-1912		
Republic		1912-		
People's Republic		1949-		

CHRONOLOGY (OF THE PHILOSOPHERS)

ANCIENT PERIOD

BUDDHISM

The Buddha, 6th-5th B.C.

CONFUCIANISM

Confucius, 551-479 B.C. Mencius, 371-289? B.C.

TAOISM

Lao-tzu, 6th or 4th B.C. Chuang-tzu, from 399 to 295 B.C.

YIN YANG

Tsou-yen, 305-240 B.C.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

YIN YANG CONFUCIANISM

Tung Chung-shu, c. 179-104 B.C.

NEO-TAOISM

Wang Pi, 226-249 A.D.

Kuo Hsiang, d. 312 A.D.

BUDDHIST-TAOIST MIXTURE

Six Schools, 4th Century

MĀDHYAMIKA (in China)

Kumārajīva, 344-413 A.D.

Seng-chao, 384-414 A.D.

Tao-sheng, d. 434 A.D.

Chi-tsang, 549-623

MĀDHYAMIKA (India)

Nāgārjuna, c. 100-200 A.D.

VIJÑĀPTIMĀTRA (India)

DHARMAPĀLA, 439-507 A.D.

PURE LAND SCHOOL

Hui-yūan, 334-416 A.D.

T' IEN T' AI SCHOOL

Chih-i, 538-597

HUA YEN SCHOOL

Tu Shun, 558-640

Fa-tsang, 643-712

FA HSIANG SCHOOL

Hsüan-tsang, 594-664

CONSCIOUSNESS-ONLY

CH'AN SCHOOL

Hui-neng, 638-713

Shen-hsiu, 605-706 A.D.

NEO-CONFUCIANISM

Han Yü, 768-824

Chu Hsi, 1130-1200 A.D.

ABBREVIATIONS

CHTCC	Chung-hua ta-tsang ching	(cf. p. 224)
CSTCC	Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi	(cf. p. 228)
HKSC	Hsü kao-seng chuan	by Tao-hsuan, 596-667 A.D. (TS2062 cf. p. 228)
KHCPTSSPC	Kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shu ssu-pai chung	(cf. p. 229)
KHMC	Kuan hung-ming chi (TS 2103, cf. p. 228.)	
KSC	Kao-seng chuan (TS 2059, cf. p. 227)	
SPPY	Ssu-pu pei-tao	(cf. p. 228)
SPTK	Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an	(cf. p. 229)
SSCSS	Shih-san Ching chu-shu	(cf. p. 229)
SSHY	Shih-shuo hsin-yü	(cf. p. 229)
TS	Taishō shin-shū daizōkyō	(cf. p. 224)
Taishō		

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

This thesis sets out to describe the development of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' as one of the principal modes of expression of Chinese Buddhism.

Throughout the long period of Chinese civilization, great thinkers and philosophers, have consistently shown their preference for 'Simplicity' and 'Silence'.

Confucius said: "I prefer to say nothing; has Heaven ever said anything? The four seasons follow each other, and all things in the universe come into being on their own. Has Heaven ever said anything?"*1

Almost two hundred years later, Mencius repeated the same idea in the following words:

"Do you think I really like debating? I am compelled to do so."*2

"The finest music is without sound; the first principle is beyond words"

said Lao-tzu, which also conveys the concepts of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence'.*3

Chuang-tzu likewise said: "He who knows does not debate, he who debates, does not know."*4

In the fifth century A.D. the six hundred large volumes of the Prajñā Sūtras were condensed into 2000 words in the treatise 'On EMPTINESS' in The Book of Chao. This gave a succinct explanation of the theory of the Prajñā Sūtras, achieving as a result, the first contact of Chinese thought with Indian Buddhism.*5 In the same century, the monk Tao-sheng said:-

"Written or spoken words are merely means of describing the principle; whenever the principle is comprehended, words should be completely discarded."*6

*1 See Chapter II (of this thesis). N. '4'.

*2 Ibid. N. '32'.

*3 Ibid. N. '53'

*4 Ibid. N. '60'

*5 Ibid. Chapter IV, Section 'D'.

*6 Ibid. Chapter IV, Section 'E'.

In the School of Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism, there is a traditional stanza which states:

"Transcending all traditional teachings (of Buddhism) and written words; pointing directly into one's mind makes people look into their own Nature and so attain Buddhahood."*7

One may therefore see that the preference for 'Simplicity and 'Silence' had been inherent in Chinese thinking for generations.

Generally speaking, written and spoken words are the expression of thought, and thought is the basis of speech.

As a consequence of the different backgrounds of the two peoples, Buddhist thought' was expressed differently in India and China. Between the 5th and 11th centuries, Buddhism dominated Chinese thought, overshadowing Confucianism.*8 As it was an alien philosophy, how did it become modified to suit Chinese tastes? In what way did it eventually become sinicized? To show how that came about is the main purpose of this thesis, which describes the process of the development of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' as one of the principal modes of expression of Chinese Buddhism.

In order that one may come to comprehend the thought process of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' in Chinese Buddhism, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the nature of Indian Buddhism and the way in which it was expressed. This thesis starts with an account of the main ideas, and characteristics of Buddhist thinking in India.

The second chapter of this thesis goes back to Confucianism and Taoism from which time 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' has been a feature of Chinese thought.

Buddhism was introduced into China during the Han Dynasty. It was ingested and domesticated over the Northern and Southern period.

*7 Ibid. Chapter VIII, Section 'A'.

*8 After the decline of Taoism, until the rise of Neo-Confucianism, Chinese Buddhism was the most popular philosophy in China. See the end of Chapter VIII of this thesis.

It was not until the Sui and T'ang Dynasties that the theory of sinicized Buddhism came into being. More than five centuries had elapsed before the Chinese people eventually accepted Buddhism completely. This long period is considered as the 'Period of Gestation' before the actual birth of sinicized Buddhism. The later theories of the Sui and T'ang cannot be separated from this period of gestation. These will be described in Chapters III and IV together with the 'Introduction'; 'Ingestion'; and 'Domestication' of the thought processes of Buddhism in China.

Having dealt with Indian Buddhism, having shown that 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' was a characteristic of Chinese traditional thinking, and having discussed the gestation of Chinese Buddhism, we may now turn to the consideration of the key concepts of the Schools of Chinese Buddhism. These Schools were the T'ien-t'ai, the Hua-yen, and the Ch'an (Zen Buddhism). Understanding of their concepts, indicates that in China, 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' have permeated Buddhist thought.

During the Sui and T'ang Dynasties, and contemporary with these three main schools of sinicized Buddhism there was also an Indian School called 'The Fa-hsiang School'^{#9} which preserved its original Indian doctrines. This School was established by Hsüan-tsang, the Emperor was among its supporters, and it was one of the most popular Buddhist schools of the T'ang. Unfortunately, the Indian way of thinking and speech of this School was too complex and abstract for the Chinese mind which preferred the traditional ideology of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence'. Therefore, this School rapidly declined while the other contemporary schools flourished.

In contrast, the Pure Land School, with its special emphasis on practice (such as reciting the name of Amidhāba Buddha) rather than theory, had been popular since the time of the Northern and Southern period, and it continued to flourish.

The continuing flowering of the Pure Land School and the quick decline of the Fa-hsiang School, also demonstrates the preference for 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' as a main characteristic of Chinese Buddhist

^{#9} See Chapter VII, Section 'B' (of this thesis)

thinking.

These further developments are described in Chapters V, VI, VII and VIII.

From the foregoing, it is plainly seen that Chinese thought preferred 'Simplicity' and 'Silence', which has become a way in which Chinese Buddhism is expressed. How Buddhism became modified and later sinicized is also shown.

This thesis does not concentrate on expounding Buddhist thought but aims at analysing the development of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' as one of the principal ways in which Chinese Buddhist thought is expressed. Related archaeological studies, bibliographical studies, and information obtained by study of ancient commentaries, are not dealt with.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

C H A P T E R O N E

THE ORIGIN OF BUDDHISM AND ITS CHARACTERISTIC MODE OF EXPRESSION

A. The Hīnayāna School

The Vedas are the holy scripture of the traditional thought of India (or the Hindus) and were derived from primitive beliefs and developed into a certain kind of traditional metaphysics (i.e. as represented by Upaniṣads). Although there are several kinds of developing and progressive ideas among them, the hypothesis of 'External Reality' was common to all of them.*¹

The Buddhist doctrine, right from the start, rejected Reality*² and took only a certain kind of subjectivity as an ultimate origin.*³ This is the difference between Buddhist thought and the traditional thought of India.

*¹ See S. Radhakrishnan, 'A Source Book in Indian Philosophy'. Ch. IX, p. 272

*² Non-self (There is no such thing as one-self) is one of the main concepts in Buddhism.

*³ This 'SUBJECTIVITY' in Mahāyāna School, was later called 'BUDDHA-NATURE'; see 'The Mahāparinivāṇa Sūtra'.

The thinkers in India had by that time accepted that Buddhist thought was in opposition to their own. If we investigate Indian thought as a whole (including Buddhist thought), we will discover that Buddhist and traditional Indian thought was derived from the same root. Their starting point is "How to relieve the suffering of existence". In other words, both seek relief from suffering.*⁴

The basic problem of the relief of suffering is firstly, to be sure of the existence of suffering; only then can the problem of "How to relieve suffering" arise. 'SUFFERING' is the starting point of the primitive Buddhist doctrine. Since Buddhist thought retained the character of traditional Indian thought, we must understand this point before we can study Buddhism.

After Śākyamuni had established the Buddhist theory, many complex, progressive changes occurred. However, basically there were two different schools of thought - Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. Śākyamuni's original teaching which could be treated as a primitive doctrine, is the basic thought of Hīnayāna.*⁵ Five hundred years after the Buddha passed away, there flourished Nāgārjuna, who established Mādhyamika and Śūnya-vāda, stabilizing the doctrine of Mahāyāna.

*⁴ The Buddha said: "I teach but two things; Dukka and the release from Dukkha"; See Majjhiminikāya, Vol. I, Ed. V. Trenckner, reprint. 1964, PTS.

*⁵ See '1'.

The following passage will first describe the main points of this primitive doctrine and its linguistic characteristics; it will then describe the central thought of Mayāhāna.

1. The Primitive Doctrine

In discussing the early period of Buddhist doctrine, our basic source is the Āgama Sūtras. These were classified into several different kinds of Āgama.

There are four kinds of Āgamas in Chinese translation:

- (i) The "Long" treatises on cosmogony (DIRGHAMAS)
- (ii) The "Middle" treatises on metaphysics (MADHYAN....)
- (iii) The "Miscellaneous" treatises on abstract contemplation (SAM̐YUKTĀGAMA)
- (iv) The "Numerical" treatises on subjects treated numerically (EKOTTARĀGAMA)

The whole of primitive Buddhist thought is based upon these sources. They are introduced below under two headings:

- (a). The Three Marks.
- (b) The Four Truths.*⁷

The Three Marks of Being

The 'Three Marks of Being' is one of the fundamental doctrines in Hīnayāna. It points out that all living things without exception are inseparable from Anicca (Change), Dukkha (Suffering) and Anattā (Non-self);

*⁷ Luo Ssu-Kuang, 'The History of Chinese Thought', Book II, Ch. III., and Kimura Taiken, 'On The Thought of Mahāyāna Buddhism'. p.5, and pp. 106-8.

the Three Marks also are the same as the three criteria of Truth in Hinayāna Buddhism. The meaning of the Three Marks can be seen in the Paradhama Sūtra and many other Buddhist sūtras. The Three Marks are:

- (i) Non-permanence
- (ii) All existence is suffering
- (iii) Non-self

Once the Buddha asked the monks,

"What do you think, monks, is the body permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, Sir."

"Are the sensations permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, Sir."

"Are the perceptions permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, Sir."

"Are mental phenomena permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, Sir."

"Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, Sir."

"That which is impermanent, is it sorrowful or joyful?"

"Sorrowful, Sir."

"Is it right then to regard that which is impermanent, sorrowful and subject to the law of decay, as 'This is mine, this is me, this is my self?'"

"Surely not, Sir."

So as we have seen, the Non-permanence, the Sorrowfulness of all things, and Non-self are the ideas of The Three Marks. Firstly let us analyse the concept of SUFFERING which is most emphasised in Buddhism. The Buddha said;

"I teach but two things; Suffering and the ending of Suffering." #8

For as he points out,

"Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, death is suffering, association with the unpleasant is suffering, not to get what one wants is suffering." #9

We say that, generally, 'Suffering' and 'Happiness' are opposed to each other, but if we think carefully, 'Suffering' and 'Happiness' are not on the same level. SUFFERING logically exists first, then there is HAPPINESS. So Happiness depends on Suffering. This simple theory is easy to understand. Suffering exists throughout life because life itself is full of craving and demands. Each craving (or demand) forms a certain pressure, and that is the suffering in one's life. Suffering came from craving and desire and is necessary to life. Hinayana said that existence is suffering.

Alternatively, Happiness is the release from suffering. For example, we need water when we feel thirst. After we have had plenty to drink, the pressure of thirst is terminated. We experience a feeling of happiness after such release. But this Happiness is not produced because of drinking water. The motivation of drinking water is not the cause of Happiness; otherwise, people will feel happy whenever they drink water. One drinks water due to the pressure of thirst. Drinking does not necessarily make people feel happy. From that we can see that Happiness only appears after suffering and has no Reality, but Suffering depends on life itself, which has a certain degree of Reality. In other words, the meaning of happiness is to

#8 See '4'

#9 See '4'

pass the barrier of suffering but the meaning of suffering is not to pass through the boundary of happiness.

We can summarise what has been said above thus:-

- (1) Suffering exists before happiness.
- (2) Suffering is based on the fact that a succession of desires produces a succession of pressures and hence suffering. So the Hīnayāna said 'Existence is Suffering'.

A further study, using the above information, shows the concept of

IMPERMANENCE. Since craving, desire and suffering exist permanently in the life cycle, once we are satisfied with what we have, another desire follows. This cycle acts eternally on human nature, to become a form of Suffering. Non-permanence (Impermanence) is the word used to denote such happenings. Although impermanence is a constant feature of our daily life, craving or desire in our mind is the cause of suffering. The hypothesis uses the concept of IMPERMANENCE as proof of SUFFERING.

The idea that 'All Things are Impermanent' runs through the doctrine of 'Causation and Conditions' (The doctrine of YIN YÜAN) in Hīnayāna Buddhism. CAUSATION means the primary cause and CONDITIONS mean the secondary cause. Buddhism emphasises that everything is causally produced, and depends on the conditions. Therefore nothing has independence or reality, but is only a series of phenomena in the nature of life. This demonstrates the negative nature of the reality of existence - which is called Non-self. It is another proof of the existence of suffering.

Suffering, Non-permanence, Non-self are the three basic concepts of Hīnayāna Buddhism and they are called 'The Three Marks', the standards by which Hīnayana thought observes all living things.

The Buddhist thought of Mahāyāna during the later period used 'non-self' to establish the theory of Emptiness, and used 'non-permanence' to suggest the eternal ideal state.

Hīnayāna is the foundation of the thought of Mahāyāna; Mahayana is a further development of Hinayana.*¹⁰

Modern Buddhist scholars said that the rise of Mahayana is a revolution in the thought of Hinayana, the purpose of which is to oppose Hinayana.*¹¹

To my way of thinking they have failed to understand the very essence of the Mahāyāna.*¹²

The Four Truths - The Fundamental Principles of the Buddha's teaching.

The 'Three Marks' doctrine is related to Hinayana observation on the phenomenon of life. Based on the 'Three Marks' is a fundamental positive assertion: The Four Truths. The Buddha himself said in his first sermon:

"The Four Truths are the fundamental principle of my teaching."*¹²

*¹⁰ Kimura Taiken, 'On the Thought of Mahayana Buddhism' (Ta-ch'eng Fo-Chiao Shih-shang Lun, translated into Chinese by Sik Yen-pai pp.13-16, p.33).

*¹¹ Ibid.

*¹² Ibid.

These Four Truths are:

- I The Truth of Suffering (Sk, Duḥkha. Chin, K'U 苦)
- II The Truth of the cause of Suffering (Sk, Samadaya.
Chin, Chi 集)
- III The Truth of the cessation of Suffering (Sk, Nirodha.
Chin, Mie 滅)
- IV The Truth of the way which leads to the cessation
of Suffering (Sk, Mārga. Chin, 'Tao' 道).

The Truth of Suffering and the Truth of the cause of Suffering.

The basic meaning of the first truth, SUFFERING, has been mentioned in the last chapter. Just as a doctor who must first diagnose the cause, antidotes and remedies of diseases, before he can decide on treatment, so too, the Buddha, in his teaching of Suffering, must before he can help himself and others to get rid of the 'Suffering of Existence' first seek out the origin of Suffering. This concern with the notion of 'Suffering' raises the problem of how to put an end to SUFFERING and seek the cure. If one is to end suffering one must find the cause of it. It is said that 'Craving' is the root-cause of 'Suffering', especially when accompanied by sensual delights and the constant search for gratification.*¹⁴ The 'Craving' of all living beings is considered so strong and blind that Hinayanists regard it as 'thirst'. Just as when one thirsts, one cannot help but desire water and forget everything else in the process, so also in the same way, one's craving compels one to desire more and more objects, and eventually fall into the sea of suffering.

*¹⁴ These two concepts can be seen in most Sūtras.

But another problem arises here - where does the 'Craving' come from? Buddha suggested that it is 'Ignorance'.^{*15} (Sk, Avidyā, Chin, Wu-ming 無明). The word 'IGNORANCE' has the opposite meaning to the word 'Enlightenment', 'Pure understanding', or 'Perfect wisdom'. (Sk, Bodhi, Prajñā-pāramitā. Chin, Pan-jo-ro-lo-mi 般若波羅蜜). It means lack of light in one's insight.

During the search for the cause of suffering they developed the doctrine of Dependent Origination (The chain of causations and conditions, Sk, Dvādaśāṅga pratītyasamutpāda. Chin, Shih-erh-yin-yuan 十二因緣), in order to point out the cause and obtain a cure for suffering. Summarising the idea of Dependent Origination we may say that there are two sequences in it: generally speaking;

- (i) because of Ignorance, people suffer.
- (ii) because of Enlightenment, or Pure Understanding, (the disappearance of Ignorance) people do not suffer.

Between the two extremes of IGNORANCE and ENLIGHTENMENT or PURE UNDERSTANDING (PRAJÑĀ, Chin, Pan-Jo 般若) there are several stages as follows:

- (I) In the order in which they arise.
 1. Ignorance (because of the lack of Pure Understanding)
 2. Because of Ignorance there arises the Will-to-Action, or Perception (Sk, saṃskāra.)
 3. Because of Will-to-Action there arises Consciousness (Sk, Vijñāna) (The cognitive Subject)

^{*15} Vinayapitaka (Mahavagga) Vol. I, p.2; Majjhimaikāya, Vol. III, p.631, and most of the Sūtras.

4. Because of Consciousness there arise Name and Form
(The cognitive object. Sk, NāmurŪpa.)
5. Because of Name and Form there arise the Six Sense
Organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.
Sk, Ṣaḍāyatana.)
6. Because of the Six Sense Organs, there arise touch
or contact (Sk, Sparśa.)
7. Because of Contact, comes Feeling or Sensation
(Sk, Vedanā.)
8. Because of feeling, comes Craving (Sk, Trṣṇā .)
9. Because of Craving, comes Grasping (Sk, Upādāna.)
10. Because of Grasping, comes Becoming (Sk, Bhava,)
11. Because of Becoming there arises Being or Existence
or Birth (Sk, Jāti.)
12. Because of Birth, we experience Old-Age (or decay)
and Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Misery and Despair
(Sk, Jarāmaraṇa.)

(II) In the order in which they cease:

1. With Pure Understanding, Ignorance ceases entirely.
2. With the entire cessation of Ignorance, the Will-
to-Action ceases.
3. With the cessation of the Will-to-Action, Consciousness
ceases.
4. With the cessation of Consciousness, Name and Form cease.
5. With the cessation of Name and Form, the Six Sense
Organs vanish.
6. With the cessation of the Six Sense Organs, Contact
or Touch ceases.

7. With the cessation of Contact (or Touch), Feeling (or Sensation) ceases.
8. With the cessation of Feeling, Craving ceases.
9. With the cessation of Craving, Grasping ceases.
10. With the cessation of Grasping, Becoming ceases.
11. With the cessation of Becoming, Being-birth ceases.
12. With the cessation of Being-birth, old-age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery and despair cease.*¹⁶

This formula, called 'Dependent Origination', is repeated in many passages of Sutras. The Buddha found that Birth is the cause of such suffering as decay and death, and traces this back to Ignorance. Finally finding that the cessation of Ignorance is the ultimate cause of the cessation of the whole chain of causations. He not only pointed out the cause of suffering, but also gave a description of the development of the individual and made the assertion that Objectivity comes after Subjectivity.

Again, this hypothesis is the very foundation of the whole methodology of Buddhism.*¹⁷ (The basic methods which are used in the Buddhist moral practice and mental discipline.) Moreover, if we are to understand such subtle aspects of Buddha's Teaching, we have to consider his idea of KARMA. Despite the obvious examples of change and decay, despite the process of growth and decline, Hinayanians traditionally believe in Karma (Rebirth. Chin, Lun-hui 輪迴)*¹⁸ They consider that life is a constant flux. What human beings recognise as a lifetime is merely a

*¹⁶ See '15'

*¹⁷ It points out the causes of Duḥka, and the way to get rid of Duḥka.

*¹⁸ Aṅguttaranikāya, Vol. I, ed. R. Morris, 2nd Edn; 1961, V, ed. E. Hardy, reprint, 1969, PTS.

specific manifestation of this flux. At death the pattern is disturbed but the flux continues, and the good or bad place to which people will be reborn is according to their deeds.

Although Heaven is considered as a good place in which to be born, Buddhists' ideal state is Nirvana, which is the only state beyond all pleasure and suffering.*¹⁹

The Truth of the cessation of Suffering

In the Sūtras, the Buddha said:

"I teach but two things - Suffering and release from Suffering."

The Third Truth is the Truth of the cessation of Suffering. This is the Buddhist ideal state which is called Nirvana.

Nirvāṇa has been called Birthless - and Deathless; the Other-Shore (of the suffering sea). Although Nirvāṇa is to be considered as an ideal transcendental world which is not bound by the phenomena world of suffering, it is not separated from it, since all Buddhists agree that Nirvāṇa is their goal which is identical with the attainment of Enlightenment, and can only be attained by following the Right Path to come to the realisation of truth. In other words, Nirvāṇa is a State which can only be reached by following the Right Path and realising the Truth perfectly. A Buddha or an Arahant is a man who has eliminated his infatuations with existence, of Craving and Ignorance, and entered into Nirvāṇa. As the distance between Nirvāṇa and this worldly world is immense, how can one bridge it? Which path can be said to lead to Nirvana? The answer to this can be found in The Fourth Truth.

*¹⁹ Mahāpar-nirvāṇa Sūtra, Mahāparinibbana-Sūtra, and other Sūtras.

The Truth of The Way which leads to the cessation of Suffering

The Fourth Truth which is considered as a map of the paths to Nirvana, is called the Eight-Right-Paths. (Sk, Āryamārga.)*²⁰

These Eight are:

1. Right Views (Sk, Samyag-dṛṣṭi.)
2. Right Aspirations (Sk, Samyak-saṃkalpa.)
3. Right Speech (Sk, Samyag-Vāc.)
4. Right Conduct (Sk, Samyak-karmānta.)
5. Right mode of Living (Sk, Samyag-ājīva.)
6. Right Effort (Sk, Samyak-vyāyāma.)
7. Right Mindfulness (Sk, Samyak-samṛti.)
8. Right Concentration (Sk, Samyak-samādhi.)

The word "right" prefixing each of the Eight Paths in this context means right which is opposite to "wrong" implying complete practice and perfect practice. Right Views implies being able to see through the phenomenal world and its delusions, which is based on Ignorance or lack of insight, and to be able to understand that all existences are Suffering, Impermanent and Selfless. One must have such a clear understanding to enable oneself to perceive the cause of the vicissitudes of life and free oneself from it. In short, the Right Views means mainly those that were set forth in the fundamental Teaching by the Buddha, and the follower must practise it in daily life. Right Aspiration or Right Motive is concerned with the quality of the drive behind the thinking itself. Also, as one who once has possessed an understanding of the nature of existence, to see through the phenomenal world of

*²⁰ See '4'

dissatisfaction, impermanence and non-self, makes one able to become emancipated from evil desires and cravings which are the opposites of Right Aspiration. On this, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Mode of Living, Right Effort and Right Mindfulness are based.*²¹

To practise Right Speech is to avoid lying, tale telling, gossip and abuse, harsh language, and idle talk.*²² Right Conduct and Right Mode of Living are the attainment of Right Aspirations toward loving others and avoiding injury to any living thing. Right Mindfulness is most closely connected with the path of Right Effort and considered to be constant intellectual alertness. Right Concentration is the advanced stage of Right Mindfulness and is considered to quieten the mind until it becomes perfectly still. Here when Ignorance disappears pure understanding is uncovered and all suffering ceases. Various methods of practising concentration are detailed in numerous Sutras, and some of them divide the Eight Paths into two groups, mainly; The Practice of Morality (Sk, Śīlā.), and the Practice of Pure Understanding and Insight (Sk, Prajñā).

The "Eight Paths" is considered to be the only way leading to the goal - Nirvāṇa, and it includes the discipline of both Wisdom and Morality. It is also considered to be the very pivotal method and basic discipline by which one's suffering can be up-rooted completely, because, in the Second Truth, both Ignorance and Craving are supposed to be the root-causes.

*²¹ See '4'

*²² See '4', and H. Saddhatissa, 'Buddha's Way' Part. I, p. 48.

Although, in the Sutras it is said that there are eighty-four thousand methods which have been set forth by the Buddha to cure the eighty-four thousand diseases of suffering, these are mere substitutes for the main road of the "Eight Right Paths" and cannot take the place of the practice of Pure Understanding and moral discipline.

As the Buddha said in his first and last sermon:

"I teach but two things - Suffering
and the Release from Suffering."

Before discussing the mode of expression of the Hinayana doctrine, let us first quote one of the passages from the Milindapañha.

Once, Milinda the king spoke to the Venerable Nāgasena as follows:-

'What is your reverence called? Bhante (Lord), what is your name?'

'Your Majesty, I am called Nāgasena; but even if parents gave one the name Nāgasena, or Surasena, or Virasena, or Sihasena, it is nevertheless, Your Majesty, but a way of counting, an appellation, a convenient designation, a mere name, this Nāgasena; for there is no SELFNESS to be found here.'

'Bhante, Nāgasena, if there is no 'One-self' to be found, who is it then, who furnishes you priests with the priestly requisites - robes, food, bedding, and medicine on which the sick rely? Who is it makes use of these things? Who is it keeps the receipts? Who is it applies himself to meditation? Who is it realises the Paths, the fruits and NIRVĀNA?'

'When you say, "My fellow-priests, Your Majesty, address me as Nāgasena."'

'What then is this Nāgasena? Pray, Bhante, is the hair of the head Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are the nails Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are the teeth Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the skin Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is flesh Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is perception Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is predisposition Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is consciousness Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are, then, Bhante, form, sensation, perception, predisposition and consciousness unitedly Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is it then, Bhante, something besides form, sensation, perception, predisposition and consciousness which is Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Bhante, although I question you very closely, I fail to discover any Nāgasena. Verily, now, Bhante, Nāgasena is a mere empty sound. What Nāgasena is there here? Bhante, you speak a falsehood, a lie; there is no Nāgasena.'

. Then the venerable Nāgasena spoke to Milinda the king as follows:-

'Your Majesty, you are a delicate, an exceedingly delicate prince; if you walk in the middle of the day on hot sandy ground, and you tread on rough grit, gravel and sand, your feet become sore, your body tired, the mind is oppressed and the body-consciousness suffers. Pray, did you come afoot, or riding?'

'Bhante, I do not go afoot; I came in a chariot.'

'Your Majesty, if you came in a chariot, describe to me the chariot. Pray, Your Majesty, is the pole the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Is the axle the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Are the wheels the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Is the chariot-body the chariot?'

. 'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Are the sinews Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are the bones Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the bone marrow Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are the kidneys Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the heart Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the liver Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the diaphragm Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the spleen Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are the lungs Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are the intestines Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the stomach Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the hair of the body Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are faeces Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the mesentery Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the bile Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the phlegm Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is pus Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is blood Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is sweat Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is fat Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Are tears Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is Lymph Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is saliva Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is snot Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is synovial fluid Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is urine Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the brain of the head Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is form Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is sensation Nāgasena?'

'Nay, verily, Your Majesty.'

'Is the banner-staff the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Is the yoke the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Is the goading-stick the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Pray, Your Majesty, are pole, axle, wheels, chariot-body, banner-staff, yoke and goading-stick unitedly the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Is it then, Your Majesty, something else beside pole, axle, wheels, chariot-body, yoke and goad which is the chariot?'

'Nay, verily, Bhante.'

'Your Majesty, although I question you very closely, I fail to discover any chariot. Verily now, Your Majesty, the word chariot is a mere empty sound. Your Majesty, you tell an untruth; there is no chariot. You are the chief king in all the continent of India; of whom are you afraid that you have to lie? Listen on me ... My Lords ...' *23

From the passage of the Milindapaṇha Sūtra quoted above, we discover that the mode of expression of Hīnayāna at least has three characteristics:

- (i) It uses simple and easily understood vocabulary;
- (ii) It uses repetitive argument to explain the same point of view from different angles;
- (iii) The arguments are couched in negative terms and use the method of cancellation to establish themselves.

*23 Milindapaṇha. Cf. Radhakrishnan, A Source Book in Indian Philosophy; Ch. IX, pp 281-284; Warren, Buddhism in Translation.
- II. pp. 129-133.

(a) It uses simple and easily understood vocabulary.

The vocabulary used in the Sutra, e.g. hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver ... urine and brain etc., all of these are concrete practical words. It would be difficult to find a single complex statement in the Sutra. This feature is evident not only in the Milindpaṇha Sūtra, but also in any Sutra of the Hīnayāna Canon (Tripitaka).

On the one hand, this special feature of the Sutras could be appreciated by any audience, not only to the nobles or educated elite.*²⁴

On the other hand, Hīnayāna paid great attention to the practice of their religious tenets. Their dogmas frequently emphasised the need for people to train themselves to refrain from injury to living things, from taking things that are not given, from sexual immorality, from falsehood, and to abstain from liquor.*²⁵

These guides to conduct were central to the doctrines of Hinayana, and were considered to be the only way on which the Hīnayāna believer could achieve Nirvāṇa. Therefore all theories are guides only for religious moral practice.*²⁶ However useful the theory of the Hīnayāna doctrine may be, it has to become of secondary importance. This is especially so when the Hīnayāna believer has reached the end of suffering.

*²⁴ See '23'

*²⁵ These are the basic precepts for all Buddhist disciples, both layman and priest.

*²⁶ Mahāpar-nirvāṇa Sūtra.

A religious practical approach typifies the whole doctrine of Hīnayāna.

In attempting to understand the influence of Indian Buddhism on Chinese culture, several factors must be considered. The practical features of both the Indian and Chinese mentalities should be borne in mind; but there are important differences; the Indian mentality attempts to achieve Nirvāṇa on a purely individual basis; whereas the Chinese mentality concentrates on the inclusion of family, relations and friends, when seeking to achieve a state of perfection of 'Sagehood'.^{*27}

(b) The Flower-Showering Argument

Generally, the language and actions of Man are rooted in Man's thought;^{*28} that is to say, all language and action are the outcome of Man's thinking. In this sense, some knowledge of the character of the Indian mind can be inferred from their daily activities. For example, in Buddha's time Hīnayāna Buddhists worshipped Buddha by offering flowers. The flowers that were offered were not bound in bunches as in the British custom, nor gathered in a basket or plate as the Chinese people do. Instead, the worshippers traditionally took handfuls of flowers and threw them over the Buddha; the flowers then scattered and fell like rain around him (the Buddha) as he sat. This form of worship was called 'Worshipping Buddha by flower-showering.'

*27 This is a common ideal state mentioned in Confucianism. See Chapter II.

*28 Nakamura Hajime, 'The way of Chinese Thought.'

In linguistic terms, some traces of the same flower-showering idea (form) in Hīnayāna thinking is reflected in their doctrine, and may be called 'The Flower-showering Argument'. In Hīnayāna doctrine, every subject under discussion was repeated from all angles, argued from different angles but related to the same point of view. In this sense, a repetition of argument is evident. An example is the passage on 'Non-Self' quoted at the beginning of this section - the hair is non-self; eyes are non-self, flesh etc. This repetitive argument on a particular subject shows similarity to the activity of flower-showering in worshipping the Buddha. Both these activities derived from the same trend of thought.

Why did Hīnayāna make use of the flower-showering argument in their doctrine? The answer to this has to be sought in the basic precepts of the doctrine of Hīnayāna. An important motivation in Hīnayāna's thinking is liberation from SUFFERING, or the attainment of the ideal transcendental state; that is, Nirvāṇa. The means by which one attained Nirvāṇa was a subject that deeply concerned the Hīnayāna school, and so practice was greatly emphasised. Hīnayāna inculcated their idea of Non-Self by using the 'Flower-showering Argument' (that is repeating the same thing from different angles). The Hīnayāna's 'flower-showering argument' (on the subject of Non-Self) is an attempt to guide people towards the achievement of Nirvāṇa by forsaking the desires of the flesh, and leading a moral life as defined by the Hīnayānan beliefs. At the same time,

the repetition inherent in the argument tends to lead the minds of the audience towards contemplation and meditation unawares. Thus they are guided into a spiritual world of 'selflessness'. Despite contemplation and meditation not being deliberately cultivated, they became the first practical steps in Hīnayāna religion. Contemplation and meditation induce a state of 'selflessness' whilst listening.

The chief aim of repetitive argument is to attempt to explain 'non-Self' (selflessness), and the primary purpose of Hīnayāna to the audience in their use of repetitive argument is to persuade people to get rid of their cravings and so attain life without suffering. 'Flower-showering' and 'repetitive argument' spring from the Indian practical thought. The modern Indian thinker emphasises that Indian Philosophy is intimately related to religion and that the motivation of the Indian mind in both philosophy and religion is concerned with the same spiritual approach to the understanding of man's relation to the Universe,*²⁹ and theory is regarded as a 'sound guide' to help man in his search for salvation. Despite the extensive use of reason, practice is accepted as the only method by which the ultimate state of human life can be understood.

*²⁹ See S. Radhakrishnan's 'A Source Book in Indian Philosophy'. P. xxi.

- (C) The arguments are couched in negative terms and use the method of cancellation to establish themselves.

As we see in the passage we have mentioned in Section I, Hīnayāna Buddhism did not actually define the 'Non-self'. The establishment of their 'Non-self' was produced by negative argument; by cancelling the 'Self'. For example, by asking 'Is your head yourself?', 'Is your face yourself?', one is thus made to examine the meanings of such statements and one's head is not one's 'SELF', one's face is not one's 'SELF', and so on. In fact, all notion is swept away. Hence there is no such thing as 'Self', finally, neither is there speech.

On the one hand, negative argument is to detach the empirical world from the transcendental world of 'Non-self'. Ultimately speech is itself negated. On the other hand, the introduction of the concept of 'Non-self' is the negation of the being itself in the empirical world. Desire to be free from suffering has brought this negative argument into Hīnayāna doctrine; the use of such figures of speech in the Hinayana doctrine was simply to serve as a beacon to light the way to the cessation of suffering. The speech was itself eventually cancelled.

During the early period of Buddhism, Hīnayāna doctrine was simple and easily understood, and its aim was to teach religious moral practice. Later on, these arguments became more and more complex. Buddhists

sometimes paid more attention to theory than to practice during the period of Mahāyāna.*³⁰ This will be discussed in detail later. When Mahāyāna Buddhism spread to China it took on a Chinese character, giving rise to the doctrine of the T'ien T'ai, Hua-Yen and Ch'an Schools. In spite of this, Chinese Buddhism later returned to basic simplicity and clearness of understanding that was so important in the early period of Indian Buddhism. This will also be elaborated on later.

*³⁰ See '31'

B. The Mahāyāna School

1. The Main Ideas

a) 'Bodhisattva'

Mahāyāna arose five hundred years after the Buddha's passing away,*³¹ and it is said that the rise of Mahāyāna was a revolution against Hīnayāna discipline.*³² The Mahayanists criticised Hīnayāna as being too conservative and too self-centred, and regarded Hīnayāna as 'egoistic' teaching. Compared with personal salvation in Hīnayāna, the Mahayanic doctrine concentrated on personal salvation but on salvation to all sentient beings. Mahāyāna emphasises that Nirvāṇa is to be achieved mainly by faith in the Buddha and love for all other people; by compassion, charity and altruism. One who disciplines himself strictly in such a way, is called a Bodhisattva. The idea of BODHISATTVA is said to be one of the most important ideas in Mahāyāna. The Bodhisattva's activities are considered to be the epitome of all Mahāyāna's virtues in all Mahayanic Buddhism. In Chapter I of the Diamond Sūtra (The Vajracchedikā Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra) can be found a discussion between the Buddha and his disciple, as follows:-

"Oh, my World-Honoured One, if virtuous men or women seek the Ultimate Enlightenment, in what should they abide and how should they control their mind?" Subhūti asked."

*³¹ See '1'; Cf. Kimura Taiken 'On The Thought of Mahāyāna Buddhism' p.34.

*³² Kimura Taiken 'On The Thought of Mahāyāna Buddhism'. p.13 and pp.33-37

'Subhūti, all Bodhisattvas should control their mind as follows:

All living things of whatever class, born from eggs, wombs, from moisture or by transformation; either with form or without form, either thoughtful or thoughtless, are all led by Bodhisattva to the Ultimate Nirvāṇa. Although immeasurable, uncountable and unlimited numbers of beings are thus led to Nirvāṇa, and no-one is left behind, verily no being at all has yet been led to Nirvāṇa. But why, Subhūti? In a Bodhisattva the notion of a 'self-entity', 'personality', 'being' and 'limited lifetime' should not occur. If it does, he is not a true Bodhisattva. Furthermore, when a Bodhisattva practises charity, his mind should not abide in forms; should not abide in sounds, in smells, in tastes, in touch or in mind-objects. Thus, practising charity, a Bodhisattva should not let his mind abide in the notion of forms. Subhūti, a Bodhisattva's mind should thus abide in as taught.*33

The Mahāyāna not only emphasises the offering of salvation to all kinds of sentient beings, but also emphasises that Bodhisattva's compassion and mercy must be manifested by helping people in daily life; such an idea can be seen everywhere in the Mahayanic Sutras. For instance, one of the most popular is mentioned in Chapter 25 in 'The Lotus of Wonderful Law Sūtra'.*34

One of the disciples asks the Buddha:-

"Why is the Bodhisattva Kuan-shi-yin P'u-sa called 'Regarder-of-the-Cries-of-the-World'?"

The Buddha replies;-

"If there be anyone who holds fast to the name of 'Regarder-of-the-Cries-of-the-World', though they fall into a great fire, the fire will not burn, because Kuan-yin hears their cries and comes to save them immediately. If anyone who was

*33 金剛般若波羅蜜經.
Vijnacchedikā Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra (The Diamond Sutra) T.5 VIII. p.748.

*34 Sk, Saddharma Puṇḍarikā Sūtra, ch. XXV, (Miao-fa-lien-hua-ching 妙法蓮華經)
Ts. 262.1X.

carried away by a flood, calls upon Kwan-yin's name, they will immediately reach the shallow water. If there be hundreds, thousands, myriads, kotis of beings who in reach of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, moonstones, agate, coral, amber, pearls and other treasures, or go on a sea voyage and if a fierce gale blows, their ships adrift upon the land of the Rākṣasas—demons, and if amongst them there be even a single person who calls on the name of the Bodhisattva "Regarder-of-the-Cries-of-the-World", all those people will be delivered from the woes of the Rākṣasas. It is because of this that he is named "Regarder-of-the-Cries-of-the-World" ... This Bodhisattva appears to all according to their need. If needed as a Hinayana teacher he appears as such; if needed as a Brahma, he appears as such; if needed as Isvara, he appears as such; if needed as a deva, he appears as such; if needed as a king, he appears as such; if needed as an elder, or needed as a citizen, or needed as an official, or as a brahman, monk or a nun, or needed as a male or female disciple, in the form of a wife of an elder, citizen, official or in the form of a brahman, he appears as such, and so on ... this is given in lengthy detail. Kwan-yin is addressed as "Most Merciful, Most Compassionate". Truly Kwan-yin is above sex, and may be represented as male or female. This sutra tells us, is the great bestower of Fearlessness, taking on for them the fear of those who are in anxiety or distress.*³⁵

Descriptions of the Bodhisattva Kwan-yin can be seen in most of the Mahāyāna sūtras, such as in the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra, the Avatamsaka Sūtra (Po-jo Ching, Hua-yen-ching.), and the Sūrangama Sūtra (Shou-leng-yen-ching). In these sutras, it is said that, Kwan-yin qualified to enter Nirvāṇa as a result of merits accumulated in the past. But he delays his final entry to become a Bodhisattva and chooses to remain in this world in order to save every sentient being from the sea of suffering. He vows to do anything which is good for people; he visits numerous hells to lighten the miseries of the unfortunate beings there. He is said to have a thousand eyes and a thousand arms, so the better able to save people from suffering.

*³⁵ See '34'

The Universal Compassion as manifested by the Bodhisattva's actions is one of the features of Mahāyāna's thinking in contrast to the individual salvation views of Hīnayāna. Hence the Mahāyāna has been regarded as a great revolution against the Hinayana, according to the point of view of modern Buddhist scholars of history.*³⁶ But the idea of Bodhisattva was a further growth of Hīnayāna thought, within the whole process of the development of Buddhism in India. The practice of moral discipline in Mahayana is central both to oneself and others, its results are manifested as compassion and altruism. On the other hand, the beliefs that all is suffering, and that pleasure itself is 'attenuated pain' continues to characterise the Mahayanic Buddhism as also does the belief that right knowledge is the means of overcoming it. The course of discipline laid down for the attainment of Nirvāṇa is as before partly based on moral practice and partly based on mental discipline. So far Mahayinism modelled its practical teaching on Hīnayāna, and so could be called a further development rather than a revolution against Hīnayāna.

b) The Idea of 'Emptiness'

As the central thought of Mahāyāna moved from individual liberation towards universal compassion and salvation, great attention was paid by the Mahāyānic thinkers to the theory, commentaries and treatises which discipline and train individuals to save both themselves and others from fear and misery. According to Mahāyānic sutras and treatises we know that Buddhism

*³⁶ See '32'

gradually became more academic and theoretical in its content. This tendency can be considered as another notable feature of the Mahayana.

In order to tell people that all living beings are impermanent, non-self, and that they suffer, and to enable them to save themselves and others from this suffering world, the Emptiness theory and the School of Sūnyatā-vāda (the School of Emptiness, Chin, K'ung-tsung 空宗) were established at an early stage of Mahāyāna.

The theory of Emptiness is mainly to be found in the Mahā-Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra (the large perfection wisdom sūtra, Chin, Pan-jo po-lo-mi Ching in 600 large volumes) and in Nāgārjuna's Maha-Prajñā-pāramitā Śāstra (the treatise on the large perfection wisdom sūtra. Chin, Ta-Chih-tu-lun), together with his other masterpieces, The Three Śāstras:

(i) The Mādhyamika Śāstra (the textbook on the 'MEAN' or the textbook on the Middle Way. Chin. chung-lun 中論).

(ii) The Dvādaśanikāya-śāstra (on the twelve points. Chin. Shih-erh-men-lun 十二門論) and

(iii) Śata Śāstra (the hundred verses, Chin, Po-lun 百論)

The Three Śāstras comprise the foundational theoretical works of this School, which is thus also called The Mādhyamika School (Chin. San-lun-Tsung. The Three Śāstras School 三論宗).

What does Emptiness mean? One of the descriptions is found in the last chapter in the Vajracchedikā Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra (the Diamond Sūtra):-

"All phenomena are as
A dream, an illusion,
A bubble and a shadow,
Like dew and lightning.
Thus should one meditate upon them."

This means that all objects are only phenomena; they are not what they appear, and they are temporary. In the same sutra, we find:—

"Although innumerable beings have been led to Nirvāṇa (by the Buddha or by Bodhisattvas) in face no-one has attained Nirvāṇa. But why? If a Bodhisattva accepts the idea of an 'Ego-entity' a 'personality', a 'being', and a 'limited lifetime', he could not be called a Bodhisattva. Why? Oh my disciple, Subhūti, these so-called objects are not real, but are merely called things."

Then Subhuti asks the Buddha:

'World-Honoured One, does your attainment, the Ultimate Enlightenment (anuttara-saṃyak-sambodhi) mean that you have not gained anything whatsoever?'

The Buddha replies:

'Just so, exactly, Subhūti.'^{#37}

According to what all these passages say, objects are phenomena, they merely possess names, they are non-self, so they are Emptiness. In short, it is because things are only phenomenal, such objects are not in themselves, they lack reality, their nature is real Emptiness. Furthermore, let us quote one more passage in order to make this concept clearer: In the same sūtra it says,

"The Buddha says:—

'Subhūti, do not say that the Tathagata (the other name of the Buddha) expounds his doctrine. Do not have such a thought.

Why?

Because if someone says so, he really slanders the Buddha, and fails to understand Buddha's teaching. Whenever someone expounds his doctrine, there is no doctrine to teach, but it is expediently called teaching the doctrine.'

From what the Prajñā sūtra emphasises we can see that no External Object is real but is merely a name. This is the meaning of Emptiness in the Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtras.

Since all things are phenomena, impermanent and selfless, so objects themselves are Emptiness. Such a viewpoint arises from an observation which is made objectively, and such a viewpoint demonstrates the thought of emptiness. The subjectivity which enables one to conceive of emptiness is one's Prajñā (perfect wisdom); and one who achieves perfect wisdom can see through appearance of objects to emptiness which is the ultimate truth.

Here is a quote from The Prajñā Sūtra, describing Prajñā:

"Śakra-devānāmidra (the king of Heaven) worships the Elder Subhūti by offering flower-showering.

Subhuti asks him:—

"Why do you worship me?"

The king answered:—

"I worship you because you expound Prajna perfectly."

Subhuti said:—

"But I have never expounded nor ever taught anything."

The kind answered:—

"You have never expounded, nor taught anything. I have never heard, nor learnt anything. Nothing should be expounded or be taught, nothing should be heard or be learnt. That is called PRAJÑĀ"*38

All Mādhyamika mental disciplines are part of Prajñā. Whenever Prajñā appears Ignorance ceases; and so suffering ceases. As the Heart Sūtra (the Prajñā-pāramitā-Hrdaya Sūtra. Chin, Pan-jo Hsin-ching) says:—

*38 Pancaviṃśatisāhasrikā prajñā pāramitā Sūtra. Taisho 374. XII

- "The Bodhisattva when he meditated deeply in Prajñā-pāramitā, saw the Emptiness of all five sandhas (the five Elements of all things) and was liberated from all suffering ... Bodhisattvas holding nothing whatever but abiding in PRAJÑĀ (wisdom) are free from delusions, hindrance and fear, and reach the Ultimate Nirvāṇa. All Buddhas in the past, present and in the future using this PRAJÑĀ wisdom come to full perfect Enlightenment." #39

So unless one understands the nature of Emptiness one cannot put an end to suffering. Unless one's Prajñā (wisdom) develops within one, one's Ignorance does not disappear. And so one suffers in the circle of rebirth. A problem arises here: if all things are emptiness, what is the attainment of Nirvāṇa? Or what is the realisation of Enlightenment? The Heart Sūtra says:—

"There is no Prajñā to attain; attainment is emptiness." #40

There is another explanation made of Enlightenment in the Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra:—

"If one practises all virtues and becomes free from attachment to an 'ego-entity' a 'personality' a 'being's lifetime', then one attains Enlightenment." #41

What is called 'ENLIGHTENMENT' is not an object, which has no attachment. It has the same meaning as 'Emptiness', whenever one comprehends 'Emptiness' one gains Enlightenment, and suffering ceases. And one is free from all attachments because one's subjectivity (Prajñā) develops within one fully. This is the highest state of Buddhism.

#39 Taishō Ch.12, pp.52-53.

#40 般若心經
Hirdaya Sūtra. Ch.XVI, pps.52-53.

#41 See '34'



c) The Idea of 'The Consciousness-only' (or The Idea of 'The Mind-only').

Hīnayāna and the 'Emptiness School' aimed at finding the way which led to the cessation of suffering. Hīnayāna's doctrine avoided the discussion of anything which concerned the structure of the phenomenal world, and simply gave some explanations of the sense-world, showing the way which led away from suffering.*⁴² As the concept of Emptiness developed, it reduced all realities of all objects, both the external things and the concepts, in the idea of 'Non-self'; and it was asserted that all things are EMPTINESS.*⁴³

Based on the thought that 'All Things Are EMPTINESS' Mahāyānic thinkers took a further step; they turned back to describe how objects or things arose; they produced explanations about the progress of things, their development, their transitions, changes and relationships in the whole world. They emphasised that nothing in the world which exists is true, but are merely objects of man's imagination and conceptualisation. Such thinking is characteristic of the School called 'The Consciousness-only', or 'Mind-only'. (Sk, Vijñāptimātra. Chin, 唯識宗 Wei Shih Tsung). The "Thirty Verses on The Conscious-only" outlines this thinking:— 'Thus, arising from those consciousnesses there are subjects and objects which are but transformations of the consciousnesses. For this reason, everything is conscious-only'. (Quote from XVI). In spite of the emphasis that the objective world is not real, and only appears to exist by imagination and conceptualisation, this School pays great attention to the explanation of the structure and the system of this world, using much abstract terminology. It analyses everything and categorises the specific characteristics of all objects. Because

*⁴² See Section (A) 'The Hīnayana School'

*⁴³ See last section of 'The Idea of EMPTINESS'.

of this, this School gets the name of the 'Dharmalakṣaṇa School'.
 (The Characteristics-of-Objects School'. Chin, Fa-Hsiang Tsung; 法相宗.)
 The fundamental texts of 'The Consciousness-only' are based on some Mahāyāna
 Sūtras and Śāstras. These are:

Lankāvatāra Sūtra

Sandhinirmocana Sūtra

Yogācārya-Bhūmi Śāstra

Madhyāntavibhāga Śāstra

A treatise by Vasubhandhu, translated by Hsüan-tsang in
 three chuan

Mahāyānasūtralamkāra Śāstra

Vidyāmātrasiddhitridaśākarika-sastra (The Thirty Verses on
 'Conscious-only')

Vijñāptimātratāsiddhi Śāstra,

(Chin, Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun. Tr. by Hsüan-tsang 玄奘)

And so we can see that the Emptiness School reduces multitudinous things and conceptions into the single idea of EMPTINESS; this School splits every thing or object into numerous branch-objects for the purpose of analysing the specific characteristics of things and concepts. For instance, in the first chapter of The Vijñāptimātratāsiddhi Śāstra (Tr. by Hsüan-tsang.) things are classified into five large groups; then divided into one hundred divisions, each having its own terminology and characteristic. Each was analysed in full detail. Then again each of the Hundred was divided into more and more small branch-objects and so on. Eventually everything is hair-splittingly analysed.

The first five are:

- (1) The eight forms of consciousness (the eight *Parijñāna*
Sk. Chin, Pa-shih or Hsin-fa. 心法)
- (2) The fifty-one mental concepts (the attributes of the mind,
especially in the moral qualities or emotions - love, hate,
etc; Chin, Hsin-suo fa 心所法)
- (3) The eleven types of physical organ and their sensory function
(The rūpa-dharma, Sk. Chin, Se-fa 色法)
- (4) The twenty-four abstract metaphysical forms (Chin, Erh-shih-
ssu-pu-hsiang-ying-fa 二十四不相應法)
- (5) The six transcendental dharmas (The Asaṃskṛta-dharmas.)⁴⁴

However numerous objects, concepts, and however much abstract terminology they have produced, the basic teaching of this School is that the whole world is merely the product of man's imagination and conception. The Mind was then the subject of a minute analysis and was described in detail in the whole teaching of 'Consciousness-only' or 'Mind-only'. The eight forms of consciousness are described in the first group in the five; the eight are: first, the five consciousnesses - the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Then is the sixth - the 'sense-centre'; the conscious mind (Sk. MANOVIJÑĀNA. Chin, I-shih 意識) which forms concepts out of preconceptions received from outside. The seventh is the 'Thought-centre' (Sk, MANAS) the self-mind that thinks, wills and reasons on a self-centred basis.⁴⁵ Finally, there is the Root-consciousness; this is considered as the storehouse where all the seminal concepts are preserved: those seminal concepts which have been stored for eternity. Every deed or thought generates a kind of impression, a sort of spiritual energy; and

⁴⁴ * Dharmapāla, *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi Śāstra* (Treatise on the Establishment of The Doctrine of Consciousness-only), Translated by Hsüang-tsang (from Sanskrit into Chinese). *A Source Book in Chinese philosophy* (original translation, with some modification for clarity).

⁴⁵ Ibid. 41

such a spiritual energy is the root cause of basic concepts. Like all fruits, flowers, leaves, branches, trunks and roots of the plant, they are generated by seed, and so everything is a manifestation of the conceptualisation-seed only; whenever they have an opportunity they will manifest themselves.*⁴⁶

The Storehouse Consciousness itself has no active energy - it is like a repository where the seeds are stored. It never acts by itself, and has to await an activating agent to arouse it. For this the Storehouse depends on the seventh consciousness. The agent is the Seventh Consciousness, i.e. MANAS, and it is the Will which constantly asserts itself to influence mental activity. It develops the consciousness of Self, and with this consciousness the dualism of subject and object arises. It creates this dualism from oneness. From here the six senses arise. In this selective activity MANAS works in conjunction with the six consciousnesses and the Storehouse Consciousness. As soon as Manas brings out the dualism of subject and object, the six senses begin to function automatically. The whole system is set into action and perception, cognition, judgment, cravings, desire etc. emerge. The six senses (consciousnesses) have no intelligence outside their own field of activity; what they experience is reported to MANAS without interpretation. MANAS is like the general headquarters, gathering all information sent in, sifting and arranging it and then giving orders back to the six consciousnesses. At the same time MANAS also connects with ĀLĀYA. The impressions or seeds of facts and thoughts committed by the subject are fed into Ālaya by MANAS, which thus adds to the Storehouse of seeds already stored there.

*⁴⁶ Ibid.

Alaya is in this way continuously replenished with new seeds, and with its seeds constantly influencing external manifestations, these manifestations in turn adding new seeds or impressions to it.*⁴⁷ Vasubandhu was one of the thinkers of this School, who outlined all these senses in a verse at the beginning of the 'Thirty Verses on The Consciousness-only' (Sk. The Trimsika of Vasubandhu. Chin, Wei-shih-san-shih Lun), viz:-

"Because the ideas of 'there is such a thing as ONESELF' and 'there is such a thing as ONE'S OWN', are false, there are varieties of subjects and objects. They arise from consciousnesses and go through certain transformations. These consciousnesses are of three kinds:
(i) the consciousness of 'ripening in a different life; (ii) the consciousness of intellect and.
(iii) the consciousness of the discrimination of the objective world." *48

As we can see, consciousnesses are divided into three kinds: First, 'the ripening consciousness', i.e. the Ālaya; second, the 'consciousness of the intellect' in the MANAS; third, the 'consciousness of discrimination of the objective world' interpreted by means of the six senses. Among these consciousnesses, the eighth, the Storehouse Consciousness, is the most important one. It is not only the source of all consciousnesses, but also is the genesis of the whole world as well. As all things are merely manifestations of its seeds. In the thought of this School, the 'Mind' (the Storehouse Consciousness) occupies this all-important role, and is discussed in detail. One of the briefest but detailed and important descriptions of the 'Storehouse Consciousness' is in the Thirty Verses on the 'Consciousness-only':-

*⁴⁷ Ibid.

*⁴⁸ Ibid.

"First of all, the Ālaya consciousness, which brings into fruition all seeds. It is not conscious of its contacts and impressions. In both its objective and subjective functions, it is always associated with touch, volition, feeling, thought and cognition; but it is always indifferent to its associations. It is not affected by the darkness of Ignorance or by memory (of the distinction of good and evil). The same is true in the case of touch, etc. It is like an ever-flowing stream and is abandoned when the state of ARHAT is reached."*49

The idea of the Storehouse Consciousness and its seeds are to be found throughout the treatises of this School. It can therefore be expediently called 'The Eighth Consciousness Doctrine' or 'The Doctrine of Seeds'. The School of Consciousness-only makes suggestions and gives explanations about liberation and suffering. The numerous seeds preserved in the eighth storehouse are classified into two kinds - the pure seeds and the impure seeds. The impure seeds manifested in the world or life are cravings, desires, selfishness, birth and death and also suffering. In contrast with this, whenever the pure seeds are manifested they are generosity, love, compassion, altruism and wisdom. If all of these are attributed in daily life, eventually one will become free from suffering and will realise the ultimate truth and be able to enter into Nirvana. Because of different characteristics, beings have different seeds, which are classified into four different groups:-

- (i) The Śrāvakas
- (ii) The Pratyeka-Buddha.
- (iii) The Bodhisattvas
- (iv) The uncertain
- (v) The Icchantika (one who turns away from goodness and is without desire for Buddha-enlightenment at any time.)*50

*49 Ibid.

*50 Ibid.

If one who possesses any one of the first four kinds of seed practises it, this one will be free from suffering eventually. But there are a certain number of people or beings who can never become a buddha or an enlightened one if they have the ICCHANTIKA-seed in their Storehouse Consciousness. One's liberation must in a certain degree be dependent on external conditions. This differs from the Hīnayāna doctrine and the idea of 'Pure Understanding' of the Emptiness School, which mainly emphasises one's moral practice and mental discipline to enable one to be free himself from suffering.

The idea of the Icchantika-seed and its claim that its possessor can never achieve enlightenment is alien to the Chinese mind, which traditionally held that everyone should be able to become a sage. This is one of the reasons why this School did not take root in the soil of Chinese culture.*⁵¹

d) The Ideas of 'The Doctrine of Permanent Absolute Reality'

The whole of Buddhist thinking is grounded in the observation of suffering, pointing out that its root-causes are CRAVING and IGNORANCE. Taking the principle of the Non-self, or Emptiness as the foundation of and the guide to, both moral practice and mental discipline (Śīla, Sīla and Samādhi-Prajñā) it indicates the path to the cessation of suffering. It then turns back and additionally gives phenomenological explanations for the creation and structure of the whole world. All Buddhist thinking may be assigned to either to the Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna School. The doctrines of Mahāyāna belong to the School of Emptiness or to the 'Consciousness-only' School.

Although only two main Schools are established, there was, in fact, another branch of the Mahāyāna Buddhism, to which very little attention was paid and on which no commentary was made;

*⁵¹ See details in Chapter II.

so it did not become one of the independent Schools in India. In contrast with the idea of non-self and impermanence of the phenomenal world, some of the Mahāyāna sūtras put great weight on the real, the permanent and absolute reality; i.e. Emptiness, which is the basis of all phenomena, is the truth of everything or the 'ultimate truth'. In contrast the proposition of ICCHANTIKA puts forward the idea that there are certain beings who are lacking Buddha-seed, who can never become buddhas. Some writings of Mahāyāna Buddhism say that: All kinds of beings include the ICCHANTIKA; they all possess the Buddha-nature, which is real, permanent, absolute reality, i.e. 'Emptiness'; and all beings must become buddhas sooner or later. Such a doctrine of Mahayana is called 'The Doctrine of Permanent Absolute Reality' (Chin, Chen-ch'ang-chih-chiao 真常之教). As in bread-making, there are only essential ingredients which can be made into bread; but sand is not one of them. And so the same truth runs through the whole of Mahāyāna Buddhism; especially the 'Consciousness-only' School. There are many teachings as to how to overcome suffering and how to reach buddhahood; but a problem arises. If there are some ICCHANTIKA who are without Buddha-seed and can never, ever, become Buddhas, it cannot be claimed that all beings MUST become buddhas sooner or later, as is stated by the doctrine of absolute reality. However perfect this doctrine is, it can only apply to a certain number of beings; but applied to other groups of beings it is not perfect at all'. However, great the Universal Compassion or Altruism of BODHISATTVA are, if it cannot be applied to all beings, but only a certain number of them, how can it be called 'UNIVERSAL COMPASSION'? Furthermore,

as all beings in this world are but phenomena, non-self, or are 'ALL EMPTINESS' there should not be any distinction between them in their ultimate 'reality' or 'subjectivity'. Why can some beings enter into Nirvāṇa, but some others can never enter into it? There are two solutions given to solve all the above problems in two sūtras of Mahāyāna. One is the idea of 'One Buddha-Vehicle Only' in the SADDHARMA PUNDARIKA Sūtra*⁵² which firmly states that all beings will become buddhas sooner or later. Another one is the Mahāpari-Nirvāṇa Sūtra*⁵³ which asserts that the ICCHANTIKA possesses Buddha-nature, and the Icchantika will become a buddha. No attention is paid to the ideas that the ICCHANTIKA POSSESSES 'BUDDHA-NATURE' and 'ALL BEINGS WILL BECOME BUDDHAS' and also, no commentary or treatise was made on these two sutras in the whole history of Buddhism in India. But this teaching is a very fundamental principle of all Schools in China, such as T'ien-t'ai, Hua-yen, Ch'an; all of them arrive at this same conclusion along different approaches. Before the translation of the MAHĀPAR-NIRVĀṆA Sūtra, violent disputes about 'Whether Icchantikas are able to become buddhas or not' had taken place in China. When that Sūtra was translated into Chinese, discussions about 'Buddha-nature' immediately became a most popular subject among scholars and lay people, for nearly one hundred years. This doctrine of 'the permanent, real, absolute reality' has an important position in the development of Chinese thinking. The main ideas of this doctrine are stated as follows:-

*⁵² See '34'

*⁵³ T5.XII

- (i) The Idea of 'ONE BUDDHA-VEHICLE ONLY'.
- (ii) The Idea that the 'ICCHANTIKA POSSESSES BUDDHA-NATURE.
- (iii) The Idea of DHARMAKĀYA.

1) The Idea of 'One Buddha-Vehicle Only'

'One Buddha-Vehicle Only' suggests that all beings will be able eventually to become buddhas, and the main purpose of all teachings of Buddhism is to do with how to take all beings to the state of buddahood. As the SADDHARMA PUNḌARĪKA Sūtra (Chapter II) repeats:

"The only purpose for which the Buddha appears in the world is to teach sentient beings about their own buddha-wisdom, so that they might comprehend and become aware of the nature of this knowledge."*54

It means that the 'Vehicle' to buddahood is through the teaching of the Buddha. There is no doubt that everyone is able to be taken to buddahood sooner or later (only if they follow the correct practice properly). Moreover, the Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka Sūtra says (Chapter II) "All teachings apply to the 'One Buddha-Vehicle' and sentient beings who hear any of the teaching of the Buddha can all finally obtain PURE PERFECT ENLIGHTENMENT." It says that there is no being who finally is refused teaching to become a buddha. The fundamental purpose of the Buddhist doctrine is the ultimate state of buddahood. So, the vehicles of Śrāvāka, Pratyeka-buddha, and Bodhisattva (the doctrine which carries people to the Arhat-hood, or the Pratyeka-Buddahood, or Bodhisattvahood) are all used for expedient purpose in Buddhism and all serve the One Buddha-vehicle. As the sūtra says:-

*54 See '34'

"I am also like all other Buddhas, knowing that all the beings have various deep-rooted desires in their minds. And I have, according to their ability to understand, expounded the various teaching (by which they could be overcome) with various reasonings, parables and expediences. But this teaching method was used only in order to lead them onwards until they were capable of 'attaining to the perfect Knowledge of 'One Buddha-vehicle'" #55

There is but one Buddha-vehicle, neither a second nor a third (Śravāka, Pratyeka-buddha nor Bodhisattva). As the sūtra says:-

"For in the whole universe, there are not even two vehicles, how much less a third!" #56

ii) The Idea that the 'ICCHANTIKA POSSESSES BUDDHA-NATURE'

As the sūtra of Saddharma Puṇḍarīka asserts that all beings will obtain buddahood, the question remains, 'How can one possible become a buddha?' What foundations are necessary? An answer to this question can be seen (by passing to the idea of the "Buddha-nature") in the MAHĀPARINIRVĀṆA SŪTRA (from the SADDHARMA-PUNḌARĪKA SŪTRA; "Buddha-nature" means one's own "realised nature".) The Mahāpari-Nirvāṇa Sūtra says:-

"... What does the 'Knowing' really mean? It means that there is no such thing as 'myself' and there is no such thing as 'mine', but each being has its own buddha-nature; and because of this, one is able to become a buddha. So, ICCHANTIKAS, only if they sever from their evil thoughts and deeds, are all able to attain perfect ENLIGHTENMENT."

And so, it points out that since everyone originally has one's own inner Buddha-nature (the realised nature), the ability to become a Buddha is always there, with correct practice, whatever level or class one belongs to; even an ICCHANTIKA can become a buddha.

iii) The Idea of Dharmakāya (or the Essence Body, the embodiment of Truth)

As the Nirvāṇa Sūtra says:-

"ICCHANTIKA will become buddhas only if they sever their evil deeds and thoughts." #57

#55

Ibid

#56

Ibid.

#57

Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra. Chapter 2, Taisho 374. XII.

It is clear that Nirvāṇa Sūtra objects to the 'Consciousness-only' point that there are a certain number of sentient beings who can never become buddhas. The Sūtra says:-

"Although all sentient beings originally possess their own buddha-nature, they are not yet buddhas. They are still not called buddhas. One must have accumulated numerous merits, virtues and as a result penetrate the inner buddha-nature. Then such a one can be called Buddha." #58

As we can see "numerous merits and virtues" mean the practice of moral and mental disciplines (such as concentration and meditation) which can provide the energy that can enable one to manifest one's own ability. This ability is one's buddha-nature. There are two important factors necessary for one to become a Buddha: one is buddha-nature, the other is the energy of practice which enables one to see or to realise one's own buddha-nature. The difference between Buddha - the Liberated One - and the sentient being - the Suffering One - depends on whether one realises one's nature or not.

As the Nirvāṇa Sūtra says:-

"Oh monks, do you know that 'Buddha' means absolute subjectivity (reality)? 'Dharmakāya' means permanence? 'Nirvāṇa' means Happiness (or joy)? Purity is the meaning of 'Dharma' (Truth)?" #59

While one's realised-nature (or realised-ability) is still in a latent state, it is called BUDDHA-NATURE. Whenever this potentiality manifests itself completely as a result one becomes a buddha. The manifestation of such realised nature is called DHARMAKĀYA. BUDDHA-NATURE and DHARMAKĀYA are the different names for the same subjectivity in different cause-and-effect situations. This can be seen in the same chapter of the Nirvāṇa Sūtra:-

"... Oh, virtuous men, what is Buddha-nature?

#58 Ibid.

#59 Ibid.

Buddha-nature is the seed of all the enlightenment of all buddhas, of all sentient beings who achieve enlightenment. Buddha-nature is permanent and Buddha-nature is joy, is absolute subjectivity (or reality) and it is purity."

The above descriptions describe Buddha-nature; the following are the descriptions of Dharmakaya:

"Oh Monks, listen carefully, 'BUDDHA' means one's subjectivity (which manifests itself completely). 'DHARMAKĀYA' means that this subjectivity is permanent. Nirvana means joy (the subjectivity of one is in joyfulness). The Law (the Truth) is purity. (Truth is beyond the morality of good or evil thought and deeds)." #60

In this sense, where Buddha-nature (i.e. the possibility of permanence, purity, etc.) manifests itself is Dharmakāya.

Furthermore, this Sūtra describes this manifested and embodied subjectivity (Dharmakāya) in a comparative statement as follows:

"Non-self (phenomena) is Birth and Death. The reality (the absolute subjectivity) is Buddha; the Śravāka and Pratyka-buddha (the primary Buddhist disciples) represent impermanence. Permanence is Dharmakāya. Suffering is the fate of all those people who fail to understand the ultimate truth. Joy means Nirvāṇa; Impurity is phenomena, purity in all things is the aim of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. This is called The True Way." #61

It declares that reality and phenomenon each has its proper place; the former belongs to the transcendental world, the latter is empirical and unreal. In contrast with the traditional doctrine of Non-self, 'Impermanence', 'Suffering', 'Impurity' (craving and desire) are used to describe the untrue phenomena; the Nirvāṇa Sūtra emphasises that the transcendent absolute subjectivity and its state are real, permanent, pure. Such thinking comes within the thought that 'The Buddha exists permanently' in the Saddharma-Pundarika Sūtra, and so the PERMANENT ABSOLUTE REALITY (or SUBJECTIVITY) DOCTRINE is established.

Another Sūtra of this doctrine - the Sūtra of SADDHARMA

*60 Ibid.

*61 Ibid.

PUNḌARIKA does not mention that Dharmakāya is permanent absolute subjectivity, but it says that Buddha's life is eternal, and that the Bodhisattvas' compassion and wisdom are numerous, unlimited and close to the Buddha's. It means that all sentient beings' lives are eternal, and that their wisdom, compassion etc. are the same as Buddha's. This Sūtra emphasises that all sentient beings will become buddhas sooner or later. Such a thought is similar to the idea of DHARMAKĀYA in Nirvāṇa Sūtra; and the concept of permanent absolute reality is the foundation of these two Sūtras. This is therefore called THE PERMANENT REALITY DOCTRINE.

2. The Characteristic Mode of Expression of Mahāyāna

The main ideas of the Mahāyāna doctrine are as above. In what form were they expressed or explained to the outside world? What features do they have? They are mainly expressed in three ways.

First of all, Ideas such as 'Emptiness', 'The world is phenomena', 'the universal compassion of Bodhisattvas', 'The Dharmakaya' etc, are often expressed through mythological stories. Every sentence of every story fully reflects a very strong, rich, literary imagination. For instance, the Saddharma Puṇḍarika Sūtra is full of these stories. There are a few sentences in the Saddharma Puṇḍarika Sūtra (Chapter 25) which describe a Bodhisattvas' 'coming' and 'going' while he was paying a visit to Sākyamuni Buddha in this world (from another world):

"A double ray issues from Sākyamuni Buddha's brow and illuminates eastwards a hundred and eight myriad kotis of nayutas of Buddha's worlds, as the sands of Gange in number.

Beyond this is revealed a world named Adorned-with-pure-radiance, whose king is King Wisdom of the pure-flower Constellation. Among this vast number of bodhisattvas is Wonder-Sound, who had decided to leave his far-distant world and worship Sākyamuni Buddha in this world. Thereupon, the Bodhisattva Wonder-Sound without rising from his seat and without stirring his body entered into samadhi. By the power of samadhi on the mount Gṛdhrakuta in Hindu, not far distant from the seat of Sākyamuni, there appeared in transformation in eighty-four thousand precious lotus-flowers with stalks of gold, leaves of silver, and ruby-flowers with stamens of diamonds. Therefore, Wonder-Sound sets out, along with his train of disciples eighty-four thousand in number, who had to pass over all the vast number of intervening domains, each of which is shaken by his passage, while lotus flowers rain everywhere and celestial instruments send forth without hands divine music. When Wonder-Sound has paid his homage to Sākyamuni, he returns to his own land accompanied by his disciples, and attended with phenomena like those which announced his progress hither ..." #62

As we see in the above description, there is no argument, but the thinking of the Mahāyāna is manifested by a story which is full of rich, literary imagination. Such imaginative stories can be found in most Mahāyāna Sūtras and they became a popular expression of their thinking. For example, in the Saddharma Pundarika Sūtra, the idea of bodhisattva's compassion is symbolised by the story of the Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva who visited numberless hells to save numerous unfortunate sentient beings and vows to do good things to others. The idea of 'the eternal life of Buddha' is also described in a story which states:

*The Buddha has not passed away yet, because a buddha is beyond both birth and death - he is neither born nor dies - but lives from eternity to eternity. The historical Sākyamuni Buddha is one of the buddhas, and in order to save people from suffering, he manifested himself and appeared in this world and other worlds for countless ages and will continue to do so in the future." 63

*⁶² Saddharma-Pundarika Sūtra, Chapter XXV. Translated by Kumārajīva. (For English translation, see Bibliography.)

*⁶³ Ibid., Chapter XVI.

Hence, it can be seen that literary imagination was one popular form of expression in Mahāyāna thought, which seemed to prefer metaphorical forms rather than reasoned argument.

According to the above discussion, the Mahāyāna thinkers express themselves much more in literary than in philosophical terms. There is no comparison elsewhere to this wide, rich, literary imagination of India.

Secondly, the characteristics of Hīnayāna, which uses negative terms and repetitive argument to explain itself, is another of the features of the Mahāyāna's mode of expression. For instance, their famous treatise 'The MĀDHYAMIKA-Sāstra' says:

"In my point of view everything is emptiness,
because all things are interdependent and
outside themselves. They are merely names;
this is what the Middle-Way means." #64

It uses the same negative method to establish its point as the Hīnayāna; furthermore, The Mādhyamika-sāstra says:

"There nothing disappears,
Nor anything appears;
Nothing has an end,
Nor is there anything eternal;
Nothing is identical (with itself),
Nor is there anything differentiated;
Nothing moves,
Neither here nor there." #65

It classified all things into four great categories, then gave each a double negation, that is, four pairs of opposites to match the categories. What does the treatise say about 'Middle-Way Means'? It does not imply that something is half (disappear and half appear, half end and half eternal etc;) it means that it transcends all those eight opposites of all things. They neither appear nor disappear etc. All of them

*64 The first verse of T.1564 XXV. The Chapter, 'Examination of Causality', in 'The Mādhyamika Sāstra'. (Treatise on the Middle Doctrine).

*65 Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa Sūtra. T.747 XIV, Chapter V.

are reduced into one EMPTINESS, by the repetitive argument and the negative method. And eventually their language itself dissolves into Emptiness, as their sūtra says:

"Subdhūti, what do you think? Does the Tathāgata (the other name of the Buddha) expound anything?"

"No, World Honoured One (the other name of the Buddha) the Tathāgata does not expound anything."

"Subdhūti, if there is anyone who says that Tathagata expounds something, he will really slander the Buddha, and be unable to understand my teaching. Subdhūti, when the Tathāgata expounds the teaching, there is really no teaching to teach; but this is expediently called expounding the teaching."

Since everything in this world is a phenomenon, including language itself, neither is true, so the ultimate truth must transcend all of these; thus the ultimate Teaching principle is beyond words.

For example, the Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra said that when Vimalakīrti Bodhisattva was asked through which gate he reached the state of ultimate truth, Vimalakīrti kept silent, and was admired by the questioner:

"Excellent, excellent; there can be no true initiation into the ultimate truth until words and speech are no longer necessary." *66

So we can see that the negative method of cancellation to establish a point is another very remarkable feature of Mahāyāna doctrine in its expression, and this mode is adopted from Hīnayāna doctrine. But it becomes more theoretical and metaphysical than when it was used in Hīnayāna.

Finally, in the School of 'Consciousness-only', since all phenomena are considered to be created only in the consciousness, they try to give an explanation of the source of these phenomena. This School split every object into numerous branch-objects, in order to analyse all the specific characteristics of all things

and concepts. Eventually everything degenerated into hair-splitting, and so their arguments are limitless and characterised by abstract terminology.*⁶⁷

As we can see, there are three characteristic modes of expression of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The first two were developed in China and had a profound influence on Chinese literature and the arts, and especially on Ch'an Buddhism; but the latter declined soon after its establishment in China. This will be discussed in more detail.

*⁶⁷ See Chapter VI of this Thesis.

SIMPLICITY AND SILENCE AS ONE OF THE PRINCIPLE MODES OF EXPRESSION IN THE MAIN SCHOOLS OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

A. IN CONFUCIANISM

1. Silence.

Indian Buddhism and its forms of linguistic expression have been mentioned in the last chapter; but what happened after Buddhism was introduced into China, digested and became Chinese Buddhism? To outline the whole process, and the development of its modes of expression, the following points should be given consideration.

SIMPLICITY AND SILENCE have been used by all the main philosophical schools from the dawn of Chinese thinking, to the peak of Chinese Buddhism in the Ch'an School. Instead of explaining oneself in words The Ch'an School regarded their own doctrine as WORDLESS TEACHING. In the words of a traditional quatrain:

'Outside teaching; apart from tradition.

Not founded on words and letters.

Pointing directly into one's mind,

Seeing into one's own nature and attaining

Buddhahood.' (see ch. VIII, of this thesis, p. 200)

Sometimes the Ch'an masters answered their pupils' questions by kicking them, shouting at them, or even cutting off the questioner's finger to make them understand without using any words. Such techniques in the Ch'an School go back to Confucianism, Taoism and the Shih-shuo hsün-yü,^{*1} and the same or a very similar attitude can be found throughout their thinking.

The use of 'SILENCE' shows that the Chinese had always believed that there is a wordlessness which is beyond the world of words, and it became an integral part of their traditional thinking. Before Confucius, in the life style of old China, there were primitive customs, many unconscious religious beliefs and

*1 世語新說

New Discussion on the Talk of the Time.- SSHY

superstitions. All of these may be called THE ANCIENT CHINESE THINKING, or THE ANCIENT CHINESE CULTURE. By the time of Confucius, some of the primitive ideas had been got rid of; some of them were preserved and developed. This cultural process of selectivity, acceptance and rejection represented the development of the thought processes of the people. This selective process decided the future of the culture which had arisen from within the consciousness of the people themselves, based on the old traditions. From that time, the people began to be aware of their own culture and the pattern of growth was set.

Generally speaking, this period of Chinese culture started from the time of Confucius. Most scholars consider Confucius to be the one who moulded Chinese civilisation in general and Chinese thought in particular. It was he who determined the direction of, and established the pattern of later Chinese thought. To see the attitude of the Chinese towards the use of words and the way in which they expressed themselves, we have to go back to Confucius' age and even earlier. The first time when the Chinese attitude towards wordlessness can be seen at the unconscious level is in the BOOK OF POETRY:

'For Heaven's dealings are profound,
They far transcend all sense and sound,
From them your pattern you must draw King Wen
and all the states will own your law.'^{*2}

Here, the word 'SOUND' means SAYING or SPEECH. The ancient Chinese praised the great virtues of their King Wen, because he did nothing but good for the people. He never complained or said anything (made speeches); but only by continuous action, like the Universe, offering all things to all people without complaint or sound. Here we can catch a glimpse of the trend of Chinese thought, i.e. that actions were better than words; even at that relatively inarticulate stage.

*2 King Wen 文王. Shih-ching 詩經 (The Book of Odes) p. 195.

'Heaven; by a deep and ceaseless Law
Orders its ways with man,
Pure shone, without a single flaw
The virtue of King Wen.'^{*3}

What their king left to them, that they had enjoyed, was not heroic deeds or great theories; but his virtues. Such an attitude towards virtues was adopted by Confucius later and developed throughout the whole of Chinese thinking up to the modern age. In the ANALECTS Confucius said, 'I would prefer not to say anything.' His students asked, 'If you do not say anything, Sire, what can we disciples pass on to others?' Confucius answered, 'Does Heaven say anything? (Heaven - means the Universe, here). The four seasons follow each other and all things flourish, but does Heaven say anything?'^{*4} Why did Confucius prefer to say nothing? Obviously, because he wanted to identify himself with Heaven and his King Wen, saying nothing but doing good for the people. So he said, 'I have made up my mind to follow in the footsteps of CHOU.'^{*5}

As we can see by what Confucius said, he gave great respect and love to the virtues of his King. He was the first in China to realise that SILENCE or WORDLESSNESS existed in the world of speech, and he preferred SILENCE. Although the ANALECTS is a short book consisting of not more than ten thousand words in which the dialogues between Confucius and his disciples are recorded, Confucius' preference for SILENCE or WORDLESSNESS appeared several times. For instance, the Analects mention:

'He does not converse while eating, nor talk
when in bed.'^{*6}

'The wise man is slow to speak but quick to
act.'^{*7}

*3 Ibid, p. 240.

*4 KHCPTSSPC 030. Lun-yü chi chu 論語集注 IX. p. 123.

*5 Chou 周朝, dynasty of

*6 KHCTPSSPC. 030 Lun-yü chi chu V. p.71

*7 Ibid I, p.5.

'The men of Old were reserved in speech out of shame lest they should fall short in deed.'*8

'When Tzu-kung asked about the noblest type of man,

Confucius answered "He first must practise what he preaches and afterwards preach according to what he practises."*9

'Those who are firm of spirit, resolute in character, simple in manner and slow of speech, are not far from virtue,' said Confucius.

According to the above saying, the attitude towards silence in Confucius' thought can be seen quite clearly. Such an attitude is derived from the moral attitudes and practical thought of the people of Chou, who paid much more attention to their own virtuous conduct in daily life, than to words or talk which merely recommend others to do this or to do that. Because of these practical attitudes of mind, Confucius founded one of the ways for later Chinese thinkers in which they expressed themselves with Silence and Simplicity, and ordained that they should avoid argument and concentrate only on virtuous practice. They examined their own thoughts and considered their own deeds instead of indulging only in talk. Most thinkers and famous teachers in Chinese history such as Confucius himself, Mencius, the founder of the T'ien-t'ai School, Chih-i*10 and other masters of the Ch'an School never wrote any books. If one wants to know something about them, one has to read their personal letters and accounts of the conversations which took place between them and their disciples and friends.

Confucius' students worried that if their master did not say anything, they would not be able to pass his teaching on to others; but Confucius said

'Knowledge is silently treasured up in one's mind.'*11

*8 Ibid. II, pp 24-25.

*9 Ibid. I, p. 10.

*10 T'ien-t'ai天台, Chih-i智顗.

*11 KHCPTSSPC. 030 Lun-yü chi chu IV, p. 45.

'Understanding will come and words are unnecessary.'*12

From this we can see that obviously words are considered as a tool for teaching, but not the teaching itself.

The same preference in thinking can also be seen in later Confucianists, such as Mencius, I-Chuan and Chung-yung.*13

"Mencius said, 'There are many arts in my teaching.

I refuse, as is consistent with my character, to

teach a man, but I am thereby still teaching him.'...*14

Again Mencius said,

'Heaven does not say anything. It simply shows

its mind by its personal conduct and the conduct of

its affairs.' (Book V, Man Chang, part I,

Chapter V)

Clearly, Confucius' preference for saying nothing stayed in Mencius' mind. The same reflection can be seen in I-Chuan as well:

'If you maintain silence and are true to yourself,

you are a virtuous man, and people will believe

whatever you say, even if you do not make any

comment.*15

"Our master said, 'Written characters are not the full

exponents of speech, and speech is not the complete

expression of ideas.'...*16

*12 Ibid. VIII, p. 120

*13 Mencius 孟子. I-Chuan 易經. and Chung-yung 中庸.

*14 KHCPTSSPC. 030 Mencius chi chu 孟子集注 XIII, p. 178 (The chapter of Kao-tzu Part I)

*15 The text of I-Ching, Hsi Tz'u Chuan 易經繫辭傳 (The Great Appendixes) XII, p. 305. The text of I-Ching consists of sixty four original combination of strokes, called 'Kwa' 卦. (Hexagrams), which were devised by Fu Hsi 伏羲 3322 B.C. at about 1143 B.C. King Wen 文 gave explanations of meanings of all figures of those sixty-four Hexagrams, which became known as 'Kua Tz'u' 卦辭. Confucius (B.C. 550-478) gave further explanations which are called 'Shih-i' (Ten Wings 十翼) Hsi-tz'u chan is a latter commentary on the explanations given by Confucianists.

*16 Ibid, p. 302

I-Chuan pointed out not only the limitation of the value of words, but even considered that 'The silent treasuring up of knowledge in the mind'*17 is better than being taught or learning by words or book.

The Doctrine of the Mean said:

'How great is the path to the sages! ... When the Kingdom is ill-governed (by a king who lacks virtue) one withdraws silently.'*18

These examples indicate to us the fondness the Confucianists had for silence and virtuous conduct, and the great attention they paid to moral practice in order to identify themselves with the virtues of Heaven and the sages.

These features spring from the practical thought which Confucius adopted from CHOU.*19

2. Simplicity.

The ANALECTS are full of disjointed dialogues between Confucius and his students' rational arguments or theoretical statements can hardly be found. For instance, one of Confucius' disciples Tsai-wo, asking about the three years mourning, suggested

'One year is long enough.'

Confucius answered,

'Would you then feel at ease in eating good rice and wearing fine clothes?'

Tsai-wo replied,

'Yes, I should.'

Confucius said,

'If you would feel at ease, then go and do it.'*20

In spite of the fact that filial piety is so particularly stressed in the family and in society in general, so is LI (PROPER CONDUCT) yet in the whole book of 'Analects' we find no further trace of argument of Tsai-wo's question.

In the first chapter of Analects, Confucius said,

'Is it not indeed a pleasure to acquire knowledge and constantly to apply it continually, and is it not delightful to have a friend coming from afar?''*21

*17 Ibid, p. 305

*18 KHCPTSSPC. 0030. Chung-yung 中庸 XVI, p.

*19 See '5'

*20 KHCPTSSPC. 030. Lun-yü ch'i chü IX, p. 132

*21 Ibid. I, p. 1

Why is it a pleasure to use and acquire knowledge? Why is it delightful to have a friend coming from afar? No reason is given.

None of his sayings quoted below were systematic or were given any further explanation.

When Duke Ting-how asked how a sovereign should treat his ministers and make the best use of their abilities and how ministers should serve their sovereign, Confucius said,

'A sovereign should treat his ministers with courtesy and ministers should serve their sovereign with loyalty.'*22

'Is JEN (Virtue) indeed far away?
As soon as I want it, it is at hand.'

Confucius said.*23

'Artful address and insinuating demeanour
seldom go with JEN.'*24

Confucius said,

'I hate the way in which purple robs red of its lustre. I hate the way the CHENG tunes pervert correct music; and I hate the way in which sharp tongues overthrow both state and families.'*25

The above sentences are not linked, neither do they point to a reasoned or logical conclusion. Confucius said,

'In teaching, there should be no class
distinctions.'*26

Confucius himself was the first to open the door of education to all classes in the feudal society of China, and had three thousand students. He did not elaborate on why there was no class distinction in his teaching. This treatment of the inexactitudes of the Analects can be summarised in the one word 'SIMPLIFICATION'. Such use of simplification in thinking can be considered as another manifestation of 'silence'.

*22 Ibid II, p. 18

*23 Ibid IV, p. 51

*24 Ibid I, p. 2; and IX, p. 131

*25 Ibid VIII, p. 119

*26 Ibid, III, p. 35

Because high moral practice and the pursuit of virtues is uppermost in Confucianist thinking, abstract theories and verbal extravagances take a lower place. That is to say that:

More attention is paid to practical ethics than to acquisition of knowledge.

It is more important to find out how to be a true man, following the example of their virtuous Kings Yao, Shin, Wen and the Sages.

Because of this, less attention was given to consideration of the reasons why this path should be followed. What they called 'Learning' or 'Study' can be found in their sayings. The Duke Ai asked which of the disciples loved to learn. Confucius replied,

'There was Yen Hui; he loved to learn. He did not transfer his anger nor repeat a fault.

Unfortunately, he died at a very early age and now there is no other. I have not yet heard of anyone who loves to learn as he did.'^{*27}

Yen Hui was therefore the one who loved to learn, who did not repeat a fault and did not transfer his anger. The meaning of LEARNING in this context is 'to learn to be a virtuous man' rather than to be concerned with knowledge.

Confucius said,

'He who aims to be a man of complete virtue with regard to his food does not seek to gratify his appetite, nor in his dwelling place does he seek the appliances of ease; he is earnest in what he is doing and careful of his speech. He frequents the company of men of principle so that he may be rectified - such a person may be said indeed to love to learn.'^{*28}

This love of learning is in order to cultivate the virtues such as sincerity, truthfulness and good conduct, rather than to indulge in argument. On one hand, Confucius personally said that he preferred to say nothing; on the other hand, to the society (or public) he said

'The people may be made to follow the way, but do not need to be told why.'^{*29}

*27 Ibid I, p. 5

*28 Ibid IV, p. 56

*29 Ibid XIII, p. 181

Confucius did not mean to deride or treat people as inferiors. He did not think the problem of 'WHY' is as important as the problem of 'HOW' (to become a Chun-tzu or in man's search for virtue.)

Since Confucius' learning is concerned more with one's spiritual development than with the acquisition of knowledge, there is no need for dispute and modes of expression are simplified. Virtuous actions and virtuous deeds eliminate the need for argument and disagreement, and simplicity and silence takes their place. For example, according to Mencius,

'To act without understanding, and to do so habitually without examination, pursuing the proper path all through life without knowing its nature - this is the way of multitudes.'^{*30}

I-Chuan says,

'People act and live by it (The Way) in daily life without realising it.'^{*31}

What they are emphasising is not the pursuit of knowledge but the practice of virtue within oneself.

Mencius' thinking also stresses the practical aspect, preferring simplicity to argument. When the disciple Kung-tu asked Mencius,

'Master, the people outside our School all say that you are very fond of disputing. Please tell me whether it is true.'

Mencius answered,

'Actually, I am not fond of disputing but I am compelled to do so. I also wish to rectify men's minds and to put an end to those perverse doctrines, to oppose their one-sided actions and their licentious expressions; and thus to carry on the work of the three sages. Do I do so because I am fond of disputing? I am compelled to do it.'^{*32}

What Mencius wanted to do was not to argue about anything to do with 'Pure Knowledge', but to be concerned with practice of virtue which was the work of the sages.

Basic to the practical approach, knowing why is not considered as important as the practice of virtue. No argument is necessary. Such fundamental practical

*30 Hsi t3'u Shang Chan, 繫辭傳上 The Text of I-ching, XII, p. 280

*31 繫辭傳 Ibid

*32 KHCPTSSPC 030 Mencius chi chu VI, p. 5

thinking gave rise to the use of Simplicity and Silence as the principal mode of expression in Chinese Buddhism.

3. Attending and Withdrawing : Speech and Silence

Silence and simplicity are only two of the forms of expression of Chinese thinking.

Although Confucius said,

'Heaven says nothing, I prefer saying nothing',

Confucius sometimes did express himself readily and clearly,^{*33} and 'speak out boldly'.^{*34} He 'could talk to Hui for a whole day and never felt tired'.^{*35}

but when 'he was in the ancestral temple or in the court, he spoke minutely on every point',^{*37}

'Whenever he was waiting at court and speaking with the officers of the lower grade, he spoke freely, but in a straightforward manner; in speaking with the officers of the higher grade he did so blandly but precisely.'^{*38}

Confucius did not mean to discount words or speech. Whenever speech was necessary to help people or the situation, he spoke to people as individuals and publicly. He said,

'Not to enlighten one who can be enlightened is to waste a man; to enlighten one who cannot be enlightened is to waste words. The wise man wastes neither his man nor his words.'^{*39}

He sometimes 'held back in his speech out of shame lest he himself should fall short in deed'.

Hence 'speech' or 'silence' are all dependent on circumstances. Since 'Hui was not one who was easily satisfied with what I said', said Confucius, he 'talked to Hui for a whole day tirelessly.' On one hand, he did not 'WASTE HIS MAN'. On the other hand, he did not waste his words, so he 'preferred to say nothing'. 'Guarded in his speech and diligent in his deed'^{*40} so as to identify himself with the virtues of Heaven.

*33 KHCPTSSPC. 030 Lun-yü chi chu V. p. 68

*35 Ibid, I, p. 9

*38 Ibid, V, p. 68

*36 Ibid V, p. 68

*39 Ibid VIII, P. 114

*34 Ibid, V, p. 68

*37 Ibid, V, p. 68

*40 Ibid, I, p. 5

'The virtuous man who is trying to establish himself, seeks also to establish others; he who wishes to develop himself, seeks also to develop others.'^{*41}

Another feature of this aspect of his thought manifests itself in ethical practice, i.e.

'When right principles of government prevail in the empire, he will offer his services; when they prostrated he will keep concealed.'^{*42}

'When good government prevails in the state, he is to be found in office. When bad government prevails in his state, he rolls his principles up and keeps them in his breast.'^{*43}

The use of SILENCE and SPEECH on the one hand; and the practising of ATTENDING (to office) or WITHDRAWING (from it) on the other, can be seen as the same manifestation of humanistic practice, which is summarised in the words of the GREAT LEARNING:

'What the Great Learning teaches is that:
to illustrate illustrious virtue,
to renovate the people,
and to rest in highest excellence
The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the universe, first ordered well the state. Wishing to order well the state, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first purified their own conduct. Wishing to purify their own conduct, they first sought to be sincere in their thought'^{*44}

*41 Ibid III, p. 43

*42 Ibid IV, p. 57

*43 Ibid VIII, p. 115

*44 KHCPTSSPC. 030 Ta-hsüeh chang-chü 大學章句 pp. 1-2

Since they took great care in both ordering well their state, purifying themselves and striving to be sincere in their own thought, so this showed in their daily life and speech.

ATTENDING AND WITHDRAWING: SILENCE AND SPEECH

Instances of the use of 'SILENCE AND SPEECH' and 'ATTENDING AND WITHDRAWING FROM' (THE STATE'S OFFICE), can be found in Confucius' followers' thinking also. As the doctrine of MEAN says:

'When the kingdom is well-governed, he is sure;
and when it is ill-governed, he is sure by his
silence to hold back.'*45

As Mencius said:

'When it is proper to go into office, then go into it.
When it is proper to stay away from office, then retire
from it. When it is proper to continue in it long,
then continue in it long. When it is proper to withdraw
from it quickly, then withdraw quickly. That was the
way of Confucius, these were all sages of antiquity,
although I have not been able to be like them - I keep
on trying to emulate them.'*46

Rooted in this humanistic ethical approach the characteristics of SILENCE, SPEECH, 'GOING INTO' AND 'WITHDRAWING FROM' are thus demonstrated. Mencius also said:

'A virtuous man who does not serve a sovereign whom he
does not esteem, nor fully command a people of whom he
does not approve. In a time of good government he takes
office, and on the occurrence of confusion he retires ... '*47

*45 Ibid. Chung-yung, XXVI, p. 23.

*46 Ibid. Mencius Chi chu, III, p. 39.

*47 Ibid. III, p. 39.

The same thinking also appears in the I-Chuan:

'The way of a virtuous man is that he either takes part in the affairs of state, or withdraws (in the proper time) and either keeps himself in silence or speaks out for the benefit of the public.'^{*48}

Being without inclination to either side is called 'The Mean' -(CHUNG).

'The Mean' has become a popular word and idea in China.

Between the two extremes of silence and speech, Confucius when necessary chose the Mean; sometimes expressing himself in speech, and sometimes in silence and so the highest form of expression in thinking was founded. T'ien-tai's idea of 'the saying of non-saying, the non-saying of saying' owed much to this style of thinking.

As to cultivating one's virtue, Confucius and his followers usually preferred to keep silent and practise simplicity and not to pay too much attention to the acquisition of knowledge, with the reasoning and argument it entailed. But he did, when it was the proper time, carry out his principles by making speeches, or keeping silence when it was necessary for the benefit of the country. These are the very prominent characteristics of Confucianists' thinking, and springing from this ethical practical thought.

B. IN TAOISM

1. In Lao-tzu's Thinking

In comparison with the preference of saying nothing in Confucianist thinking, Taoism regards Silence and namelessness as the 'Tao' which is the ultimate Truth and existed before the Universe.

The first sentence in the book of 'Lao-Tzu' says:

'The Tao that can be spoken of is not the Tao itself,
The name that can be named is not the name itself.
The nameless is the origin of the Universe.
The named is the mother of all things.'^{*49}

*48 The Text of I-ching, Hsi-tzu'u Chan, I, p. 287

*49 KHCPTSSPC. 054. Lao-tzu pen-i, I, p. 1

Lao-tzu described the ultimate Truth as 'Tao' which existed before speech, beyond the describable, and is Silent. Only after Tao -- is split up into Subject and Object, then individual things with words or names arise.

As Lao-tzu says:

'There was something undifferentiated and whole which existed before the Universe, soundless and formless, dependent on nothing and changeless. This state may be considered as the mother of the original form of substance. I do not know its name. I call it Tao. If forced to give it a name, I shall call it GREAT.'*50

What Lao-Tzu considered as the 'Soundless', 'Nameless', 'Wordless' and 'Changeless' are metaphysically indicative of the character of the Universe's original mother - Tao.

Since TAO is the Ultimate Truth and is beyond words, Lao-Tzu says:

'One who knows (the Tao) does not speak about it.
One who speaks (the Tao) does not know it.'*51
'Good men are not argumentative; the argumentative ones do not understand (the Tao)'*52

and so Lao-Tzu has the same attitude towards refraining from argument as Confucius and Mencius, but the former had a more metaphysical approach. Whilst the latter two were more concerned with moral practice.

Lao-Tzu also says:

'The Greatest Voice has no sounds.
The Greatest Form has no shape.
And TAO is hidden and nameless.'
The Greatest skills seem to be clumsy.
The Greatest eloquence seems to stutter.'*53
'Through this I know the advantage of taking no action and the teaching without words.'*54

*50 Ibid. I, p. 26

*51 Ibid. II, p. 65.

*52 Ibid. II, p. 93.

*53 Ibid. II, p. 48. *54 Ibid. II, p. 49.

As can be seen, Lao-Tzu's preference was for silence and he has the same ideas of 'Wordless teaching', 'the universe says nothing', as Confucius. The difference between them is that Confucianism prefers practice to speech and Lao metaphysically regards soundless as the greatest Sound and Wordlessness as the origin of the ultimate Truth of the universe.

Since the origin of the Universe is considered to be wordlessness, Lao-Tzu wishes to go back to these sources of life and identify himself with it. Although Lao-Tzu's attitude towards non-action and silence is metaphysical, it still cannot go beyond practice which always tends to identify itself with truth.

Such thinking can be seen at a deeper level in another chapter of Lao-Tzu:

'Man models himself after Earth.

Earth models itself after Heaven.

Heaven models itself after Tao.

Tao models itself after Nature.*55

One of the results of this practical thinking is that most followers of Taoism are hermits who shun others and follow non-action and silence in daily life. The Taoist wishes to identify himself with, and become part of the original source. Lao-Tzu says:

'After things reach their prime,

They begin to grow old,

which means the opposite of Tao.

Whatever is contrary to Tao will soon perish.*56

'He who knows does not speak.

He who speaks does not know -

Close the mouth.

Shut the doors.

Blunt the sharpness.

*55 Ibid. I, p. 27.

*56 Ibid. I, p. 33.

Untie the tangles.

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Soften the light

Become one with the dusty world.

This is called Profound Identification.*57

Do not go against Tao - Nature herself is wordless, nameless and soundless. Taoism's non-action and wordless thinking develops from this. Confucius' ethical identification and Lao-Tzu's metaphysical identification are both rooted in virtuous practice and preference for silence. Such practical approaches were also characteristic of the form of Buddhism which was Sinicized centuries later.

2. In Chuang-tzu's Thinking.

Chuang-tzu was supposedly born about 120 years after the death of Lao-tzu. His thinking was built on Lao-tzu's and concentrated on the return to Nature.

Although both Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu considered 'words' as originally 'wordlessness', there were still some opposing views. In Chuang-tzu's view, although he still preferred wordlessness to words and did not like to argue over what is right or wrong. In his work on The Equality of Things, he defined words and silence as equal. For things are not only relative, they are identical, since opposites produce each other, likewise with 'words' and 'wordless'. He said:

'Words are those that have something to say,
but if what they have to say is not fixed,
then do they really say anything; or do they
say nothing?

People suppose that words are different from
the chirps of baby birds, but is there any difference,
or is there none?

*57 Ibid. II, p. 65

'What does the way rely on to show us truth and falsehood?

The way (Tao) relies on little achievements and words rely on vanity.

How can words show us right and wrong?

How can the Tao go away and not exist?

How can words exist and not be acceptable?

When the Tao relies on little practical achievements and words rely on vanity, then we have the right and wrong of Confucius and Mo-tzu.*58

Like Mencius, Chuang-tzu did not approve of argument. But Mencius was forced to debate, and Chuang-tzu considered that it was not necessary. Since all the issues were originally equal, Chuang-tzu preferred to return to the original creation.

On 'The Subject of Equality of Things', Chuang-tzu says:

'There is nothing in the world higher than the tip of a hair, and Mount T'ai is tiny. No-one has lived longer than a dead baby, and the old man P'eng-tzu (who was 800 years old when he died) died young. Heaven and Earth were born at the same time as I was and all things are in the same body with me. We have already become one, so how can I say anything, but just say that we are one, and say nothing. The one, and what I said about it, make two, and the original one make three. If we go on this way then even the cleverest mathematician cannot tell where we will end, much less an ordinary man. If by moving from non-being, we get to there, how far will we get if we move from being to being? Better not to move, but to let things be.*59

*58 Ibid. Chuang-tzu chi chieh 莊子集解 I, p. 9.

*59 Ibid. I, pp. 12-13.

Returning to the original state of things (which is Tao) and letting things stay as they are, leads to 'Silence'. This is Chuang-tzu's fundamental idea. His attitude towards silence can be seen much more clearly as follows:

'In the case of the Spring and Autumn Age,
in the records of the former kings (of past ages),
the sages discussed but did not debate. So I say
those who debated comprehend the true meaning. What
does it mean? you ask. The sages saw all things whole.
Ordinary men discuss their feelings among themselves and
emotions before each other.
So I say, those who debate fail to see.'*60

He also said:

'The great Tao is nameless.
The greatest understanding is not spoken.
The great virtues are not virtuous.
The greatest modesty is not humble.
The greatest daring does not act.
If the Tao is made clear, it is not the Tao.
If judgements are put into words, they are inadequate.'*61

The same attitude towards the practice of silent thought appears in the following sayings:

'Who can understand (the Tao) does not debate.
The Tao that can be expressed is not the true Tao.
If there is one who can fully understand this,
He would be called the RESERVOIR OF HEAVEN.'*62

*60 Ibid. I pp. 13-14.

*61 Ibid. I p. 14.

*62 Ibid. I, p. 14.

Chuang-tzu's ideal state would be the Reservoir of Heaven in which everything returns to its origin, where there is neither words nor speech nor differentiation and whoever reaches that ideal state is the sage.

Confucianism and Taoism are the two main Schools in Chinese thought and are regarded as the two wheels on the axle of Chinese thinking; the one is ethical and the other is natural. They both concentrate on the problem of practical human existence and both prefer wordlessness and silence without dispute, although they have reached this point from different starting points.

C, SIMPLICITY AND SILENCE IN CHINESE DAILY LIFE

Instead of disputing or debating a question, the Chinese traditionally repeat a common sentence: 'Do not argue, just to ask your own mind is enough.' The idea of 'Asking your own mind' can be considered as the reflection both of ethical introspection and spontaneous returning to one's origin.

It was common in China to build an arch of honour or doorway for a chaste woman in honour of her wifely fidelity and filial piety, but a memorial stone or a monument built for a hero could hardly be found in the whole long history of the Chinese. Such a Chinese characteristic is a result of practical, ethical thought, which paid most respect to personal virtue.

The predominant ethical practice of the Chinese is especially seen in the selection of officials. The ones who were good and virtuous were chosen to be ministers or high officers, and it is common for an emperor most respectfully to invite a hermit to be his minister.

The table shown below gives a list of selected officers who were chosen because of their great filial piety or other virtues during the Han Dynasty. It demonstrates clearly that the Chinese people paid great respect to ethical practice.*63

<u>CHINESE DYNASTIES</u>	<u>WESTERN ERA</u>	<u>IMPERIAL EDICT</u>
Emperor Kao-tsu's Eleventh year.	11th year 196 B.C.	Commission that district officers recommend good and excellent men suitable for appointment as District Officers for the first time.
Emperor Kao-tsu's 12th year.	195 B.C.	It was mandated that district officers were to recommend good and excellent men to be appointed officers for the second time.
Emperor Wen's 2nd year.	178 B.C.	It was mandated that officers were to recommend excellent and virtuous men who could bravely offer advice to the emperor with a frank and outspoken heart, to be appointed as high officers.

*63 Han Han Shu 後漢書 (History of 後漢 later Han Dynasty). XXXVII, and XXXVII.

CHINESE DYNASTIESWESTERN ERAIMPERIAL EDICT

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Emperor Wen's 15th year	165 B.C.	It was mandated that good and excellent literary men be appointed as officers.
The first year of the Chien-yuan period of Emperor Wu.	140 B.C.	It was mandated that district officers select men who were good and virtuous and could offer advice bravely to the emperor with an outspoken heart.
The first year of the Yuan-kwang period of Emperor Wu.	134 B.C.	Made it law that all permanent officers recommend two men to be appointed officers; one who had filial piety, another who was pure and honest.
The first year of the Yüan-shu period of Emperor Wu.	128 B.C.	Instructed all officers that anyone of them who recommended excellent men would be rewarded; and those who kept the virtuous men from becoming known would be punished.
The first year of the Yuan-shao period of Emperor Wu.	122 B.C.	Ordered that virtuous scholars should be invited to become officers.
The fifth year of the Yüang-fung period of Emperor Wu.	106 B.C.	It was mandated that junior officers should recommend people who were capable, knowledgeable men to be state officers.
The first year of the Shih-yuan period of Emperor Ch'iao.	86 B.C.	Officers were sent to the provinces to carry out the policy of selecting good and excellent virtuous men as officers of state.
The 5th year of the Shih-yüan period of Emperor Ch'iao.	82 B.C.	It was mandated to recommend four men to be state's officers, two of them were to be the good and excellent virtuous men, and the other two would be literary ones.
The first year of the Pen-shih period of Emperor Hsuan.	73 B.C.	It was mandated that district officers recommend two men who were literary and were born into a family of high degree.
The 4th year of the Pen-shih period of Emperor Hsuan.	70 B.C.	It was mandated that officers should recommend one man who was good and virtuous and one man who had good moral character.

The 3rd year of the
Ti-chieh period of
Emperor Hsuan.

67 B.C.

In March, it was mandated that all officers should recommend men who were good, virtuous and loved by the people to be officers of state. In October, mandated officers were to recommend men who were good and virtuous with good moral character and heart to be advisers to the emperor. In November, mandated officers were to recommend men who were virtuous in filial piety and well known by their fellow countrymen.

The 4th year of the
Yuan-k'ang period of
Emperor Hsuan.

62 B.C.

High officers were sent to go to the provinces to examine the district officers to see if they were loyal to the state and select men who were capable and knowledgeable to be the state's officers.

58 B.C.

It was mandated that the prefectural officers should recommend good and virtuous men and one man who could work intimately for people to be officers of state.

The 2nd year of the
Ch'u-yuan period of
Emperor Yuan.

47 B.C.

In the event of earthquake, mandated district officers were to appoint capable knowledgeable and educated men to be advisers who could inform the emperor bravely and frankly.

The first year of
the Yung-yuan period of
Emperor Yuan.

43 B.C.

Commissioned district officers were to appoint men to be officers of state who were humble, honest, simple and adaptable in their daily life.

The second year
of the Yung-yuan
period.

42 B.C.

In the event of eclipse, mandated district officers were to appoint two men to be officers, who were knowledgeable, educated and capable and who were good, virtuous and frank.

The 4th year of
the Chien-ch'iao period
of Emperor Yuan.

35 B.C.

Senior officials were sent round to select highly educated men of proven ability to be the state's officers.

The 2nd year of the
Chien-shih period
of Emperor Cheng.

31 B.C.

Mandated district officers were instructed to select men to be officers of state. One who was good and virtuous, another who was to be honourable and upright.

The 3rd year of the Chien-shih period of Emperor Hsuan.	30 B.C.	In the event of eclipse and earthquake, the Prime Minister and the highest officer of the state and the district officers were mandated to select men to be state's officers who were good, virtuous, honourable and frank to give advice to the emperor.
... The 4th year of Ho-p'ing the period of Emperor Hsuan.	25 B.C.	In the event of eclipse, mandated officers were instructed to appoint men who were sincere and generous to speak plainly to the officials or the emperor.
The 2nd year of the Hung-chia period.	19 B.C.	In cases of floods, droughts and the widespread epidemics, men were to be appointed to office who were both honourable, generous and straightforward in speech.
... The 3rd year of the Yung-shih period.	14 B.C.	Senior officers were sent to go round to inspect and select two men to office, one who was sincere and good in virtuous practice and the other righteous.
... The first year of the Yuan-yen period.	12 B.C.	In the case of eclipse and falling meteorites, prefectural officers were mandated to select two men, one sincere and generous, and one who was honest in heart and could speak out his principles straightly in remonstrance to the sovereign and officers.
The first year of the Chien-p'ing period of Emperor Ai.	6 B.C.	Ministers, dukes and the highest officers of the land were instructed to select men to office, one with sincere and filial piety, the other one with the ability to protect the government or the sovereign with loyalty and frankness.
... The first year of the Yüan-shuo period of Emperor Ai.	2 B.C.	In the case of eclipse, dukes and senior officers were instructed to select two men to office, one who should be good and virtuous, the other one who should be sincere and honest to tackle the problems with sincerity and frankness.
The first year of the Yüan-shih period of Emperor P'ing.	1 B.C.	In the case of eclipse, it was mandated that two men should be appointed who should be good and virtuous.

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The first year of the Chien-wu period of Emperor Kwong-wu.	30 A.D.	In the case of eclipse, mandated Dukes were to appoint two men to office, one who was good and virtuous, nother who should be sincere and frank.
... the 7th year of the Chien-wu period.	31 A.D.	In the case of eclipse, it was mandated that Dukes, Chief Magistrates were to appoint two men, one who was good and virtuous and another who was sincere and frank to the office.
... the 12th year of of the Chien-wu period.	36 A.D.	It was mandated that the Lords were to appoint two men who were of outstanding knowledge and ability and another two men who were sincere and honest to be district officers to the central office of the state.
		It was ordained that senior officers were to select two junior officers who were pure and incorruptible and sincere in their duty to the state's office.
		It was ordained that the top generals were to promote two sincere and incorruptible junior officers to the state office every year.
		It was mandated that censors and Chief Magistrates were to promote two men of outstanding knowledge and full of practical ability to the office of the state.
The first year of the Chien-chu period of Emperor Chuang.	76 A.D.	On the occasion of a recorded earthquake, the Grand tutor (the teacher of the Heir), Lords and ministers were to select one good and virtuous man, one sincere and frank and one who could frankly criticise and remonstrate the state's policy to the officers.
... the 5th year of the Chien-chu period.	80 A.D.	Should there be an eclipse, select one man who could frankly and straightforwardly give constructive criticism and advice to the state.

The first year of the Yuug period of Emperor An.	107 A.D.	Should there be an earthquake, mandated Lords and ministers and senior officers were to select men who were good and virtuous and who were sincere and frank as officers.
The 5th year of the Yuug period of Emperor An.	111 A.D.	In the event of earthquake and eclipse, make appointments as above and promote ones with filial piety as officers.
The first year of the Yung-ch'u period of Emperor An.	114 A.D.	In the event of drought and locusts and calamities, mandated Lords and Magistrates were to select two men to office, who were sincere and straight of heart and character.
The first year of the Chien-kwong period of Emperor An.	121 A.D.	Decreed the appointment of one man who was virtuous to be an officer.
The 3rd year of the Yen-kwong period of Emperor An.	124 A.D.	During a widespread epidemic in the capital, it was mandated that Lords, Ministers and Chief Magistrates were to select two men to office, who should be good and virtuous and capable of petition to the office.
The first year of the Yüan-chia period of Emperor Shun.	132 A.D.	A mandate was issued that the Chief Magistrate should select men to be officers who had filial piety, true incorruptibility, were educated and older than forty.
The 2nd year of the Han-an period.	142 A.D.	It was mandated that Lords and great Generals were to select a good and virtuous man, a sincere and frank man and one man who was deep in profound literature or truth to office.
The first year of the Chien-k'ang period of Emperor Ch'ung.	144 A.D.	In the event of earthquake, two men were appointed, one who was good and virtuous and the other a virtuous hermit as officers of state.
The first year of the Chien-ho period of Emperor Chuan.	147 A.D.	In the case of earthquake, it was mandated that three men be appointed, one who was good and virtuous, one who could remonstrate frankly and bravely and one who had filial piety and was a scholar.

... the 3rd year of the Chien-ho period.	149 A.D.	Two men were selected to office, one who was good and virtuous and the other who was able to give constructive criticism and advice to the state bravely and frankly.
The 2nd year of the Yung period of Emperor Huan.	154 A.D.	In the case of earthquake, men were appointed to office as above.
... the 2nd year of the Yüan- period.	165 A.D.	On occasion of eclipse, two men were selected, one good and virtuous and one sincere and frank.
... the 9th year of the Yüan-hsi period.	166 A.D.	In the case of eclipse, mandate was issued to Lords and ministers and Generals to select men who had most filial piety to be appointed.
... the first year of the Yung-k'ang period.	167 A.D.	In the case of earthquake and eclipse, it was mandated that Lords and Generals were to appoint wise and able men to office.
The first year of the Chien-ling period of Emperor Ling.	168 A.D.	In the occasion of eclipse, every Lord and every Magistrate was mandated to recommend one virtuous man to office.
The 5th year of the Chien-an period of Emperor Hsien.	200 A.D.	In the case of eclipse, it was mandated that all Lords were to select two men who showed most filial piety to be officers. Chief Magistrates were instructed to select one man as above to office.

Official records also show as follows:

'T'ung Fu was ten times recommended by the Prime Minister, three times by senior officers; then again was recommended as a good and virtuous man, as a sincere and upright man, as an educated man, and many times (recommended) as a virtuous man, but he refused to accept any of these official posts. His reason for rejecting the offers was "Not being healthy enough".^{*64}

'Fa-chun was selected for office by the Duke. But Fa-chun did not accept. Then he was recommended five times as a man who

*64 Ibid.

had "filial piety and pure conduct" by a district official, and was three times appointed as an official scholar. None of these posts was accepted.' *65

From the table above, we can see that the most significant fact is that officers chosen were described as good and virtuous men, sincere and straightforward and possessing filial piety. The criteria were all concerned with good practical ethical conduct but seldom with theoretical knowledge. The Emperors in the Han period paid great respect to ethical merit. The people themselves paid even more respect to such merit. And because of the very nature of their virtues, many upright and virtuous men had no interest whatever in becoming government officers. Some of them even refused to take office. This preference for remaining as one of the common people instead of going into office, was a common attitude, and frequently found in Chinese historical records. The foregoing references demonstrate three things:

- (1) The sovereigns chose virtue as the criterion for the selection of officials. This was a further characteristic of the practical outlook engendered by the Confucianists' positive ethical thought.
- (2) The virtuous men's rejections of official appointments were manifestation of Taoism, which tends to lead men to withdraw from the world and go back to nature.
- (3) As a result of the practical ethical thought of Confucianism and Taoism, 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' became one of the principal modes of expression of Chinese thought.

*65 Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE

BUDDHISM DURING THE HAN DYNASTY AND ITS FORM OF EXPRESSION

A. THE CURRENT THOUGHT OF THE TIME1. The Influence of the Yin Yang School

Before Buddhism came to China, during the Han Dynasty, the current thought was that of the Yin Yang Confucianism. Tung Chung-Shu was regarded as the greatest Confucianist of the time. He expounded Confucianism in terms of astrology and cosmology with the 'Yin Yang' thought.*1 In addition, Yin Yang Confucianism tended towards the religious in their attitude towards Heaven, which seems to them like a God possessing a strong will.

'According to a rough classification, where things in Heaven and Earth undergo abnormal changes, these are called "PRODIGIES"; lesser ones are called "visitations". Visitations always appear first and are then followed by prodigies. Visitations are the reprimands of Heaven; prodigies are its warnings. If humans, thus reprimanded, still fail to understand, they are then made to feel awe through such warnings ... The source of all such visitations and prodigies lie in faults that exist within the nation. Heaven sends forth fearful visitations in order to announce its reprimand. If a human, thus reprimanded, fails to understand these manifestations, strange prodigies then appear in order to strike him with terror, and if he still does not understand (the cause for) his fear, only then do misfortunes and calamities overtake him. From this may be seen the goodness of Heaven's purpose and its unwillingness to bring ruin upon humans.' *2

According to the above passage from the writings of Tung Chung-shu, who is regarded as the greatest Han Confucian, the Yin Yang Confucianist concept of virtue is cosmic and astrological rather than ethical and humanistic. As a result, both of the first Ch'in Emperors "Burning

*1 Tung Chung-shu (董仲舒 c. 179 B.C. - c. 104 B.C.), Wing-Tsit Chan, 'A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy', Ch. 14, 272; and 'The History of the Former Han Dynasty', (Chien-han Shu 前漢書) Ch. 56, pp. 1-23.

*2 The 'Ch'un-ch'iu Fan-lu' (春秋繁露 Luxuriant Gems of the Spring and Autumn Annals.) Vol. 8, p. 24.

of the Books' ^{*3} and of the influence of Tung Chung-shu's Yin Yang Confucian ideology, many kinds of astrological arts, such as fortune telling, divination, the prognostication of calamities and the art of achieving immortality flourished throughout China during the Han. ^{*4}

2. The Ambition of the Emperors to achieve Immortality

The Ch'in and Han emperors showed a great interest in the arts of divination and ardently pursued their interest in achieving immortality. They had a profound belief in the validity of the prognostication texts and in the efficacy of divination.

Accounts of this are found throughout the Chinese official histories such as Shih-chi (Ssu-ma Ch'ien's Historical Records) and Pan Ku's ^(H. I. S. S.) Han-shu (The History of the Former Han Dynasty). In the Shih-chi the First Ch'in Emperor is described as follows:

'The First Emperor (of Ch'in) then proceeded east on his journey as far as the border of the sea, stopping along the way to perform rituals and sacrifices to the various famous mountains and great rivers and to the eight divinities and their companions ...

From the time of Kings Wei and Hsuan ^{*5} of Ch'i, the disciples of Tsou-yen ^{*6} were very active in propounding their master's doctrine of the succession of the FIVE AGENTS ^{*7}. When the ruler of Ch'in became an Emperor, the men of Ch'i accordingly explained to him this doctrine and hence it was that the first emperor selected water as the patron agent of his reign ... Thus from this time there appeared a host of men, too numerous to mention, who expounded all sorts

*3 Ssu-ma Ch'ien, 'Shih-chi' (Records of the Historian ^{史記}) and most other books on Chinese history. In the Ch'in Dynasty, all classical books were burnt by imperial order, except medical, cosmological and astrological works.

*4 Hou Wai-lu, 'Chung-kuo Ssu-hsing T'ung-shih' ^{中國思想通史}. (A General History of Chinese Thought.) Vol. 2, Fan Wen-lan, 'Chung-kuo t'ung-shih' (^{中國通史} A Brief General Chinese History) pp. 240-247.

*5 Ch'i Wei and Hsuan ^{齊威王. 宣王.}

*6 Tsou-yen ^{鄒衍}.

*7 'Wu-hsing', the 'Five Agents' is one of the basic concepts of the Yin Yang School. These five are: metal, wood, water, fire and earth. They were considered to be the basic elements.

of weird and fantastic theories and went to any lengths to flatter the rulers of the day and to ingratiate themselves with them ... From the age of Kings Wei and Hsuan of Ch'i and King Chao of Yen, men were sent from time to time to set out*⁸ to sea and search for the islands of P'eng-lai, Fan-chang and Ying-chou. These were three holy mountains which were supposed to exist in the Gulf of Pohai. They were not far from men, it was said, but the difficulty was that whenever a boat was about to touch their shores, a wind would always spring up and drive it away ... When the first Emperor of Ch'in united the empire under his sway, and journeyed to the sea, a countless throng of artisans of divination assembled and the use of the art of divination appeared throughout the whole empire ... The first emperor ordered some men to gather together a number of youths and maidens and send them to sea to seek for (the) divinities ... The following year, the emperor*⁹ himself again journeyed to the sea, going as far as Lan-ya; then, passing by Mount Heng, he returned to the capital by way of Sang-tang. Three years later he made a trip to Chieh-shih on the coast, at which time he cross-examined the divination experts who were supposed to have gone to sea to look for the divinities. He returned to the capital by way of Shang. Five years later after this, he made a trip south to Mount Hsiang, then went to climb Mount K'uai-chi, along the coast on his way back, hoping to acquire some of the wonderful medicine of immortality brought from the three divine mountains in the sea. But his hopes were in vain. When he had gone as far as Sandy Hill, he passed away.*¹⁰

A similar attention by an Emperor to his own longevity can be seen too in the record of the Emperor Wu of the Han in the Chih-chi:

(... Li Shao-chün*¹¹ went and appeared before the emperor (Wu) to expound the worship of the God of the fireplace and explain his theory on how to achieve immortality through dietary restrictions. The emperor treated him with great respect ... Li Shao-chün specialised in all arts of divination ... claiming that he could make the spirits serve him and prevent old age. He travelled about to the courts of the various feudal lords, expounding his arts of divination. He relied wholly on his ability to work divination and was clever at making pronouncements that were found to be curiously apt. When Li visited the emperor, the latter questioned him about an ancient bronze vessel which the emperor had in his possession. "This vessel", Li replied "was in the Cypress Chamber in the year of the reign of Duke Huan of Ch'i*¹² (676 B.C.)" When the inscription on the vessel was deciphered, it was found that it had in fact belonged to Duke Huan of Ch'i. Everyone in the palace was filled with

*⁸ P'eng-lai, Fan-chang, and Ying-chou 蓬萊, 方丈, 瀛洲.

*⁹ 琅玕.

*¹⁰ Shih-chi, Vol. 8.

*¹¹ Li Shao-chün 李少君.

*¹² Ch'i Huan Kung 齊桓公.

astonishment, claiming that Li must be a divinity who had lived hundreds of years ... Li Shao-chun then advised the emperor, "If you sacrifice to the fireplace you can summon the spirits to you, and if the spirits come to you you can transform cinnabar into gold, and you may drink and eat from vessels which will prolong the years of your life.

With prolonged life you may visit the immortals who live on the island of P'eng-lai in the middle of the sea. If you visit them and perform the sacrifices, you will never die. This is what the Yellow Emperor *13 did ... As a result, the emperor Wu for the first time began to sacrifice in person to the fireplace. He despatched artisans to set out on the sea in search of the Divinity of An-ch'i Shang *14 and the immortals of P'eng-lai; and attempted to make gold out of cinnabar and various kinds of medicinal ingredients.

After some time, Li Shao-chun fell ill and died. The Emperor, however, believed that he was not really dead but had transformed himself into a spirit and he ordered K'uan Shu, a clerk from Huang-ch'ui to carry on the arts of divination which Li had taught ...'

Such a belief in the arts of divination and fortune telling as well as the desire to achieve immortality were popular throughout China during the Ch'in and Han. It was during the Han Dynasty that Buddhism first arrived in China.

3. Taoism as a Religion and as a Philosophy

During Han all such beliefs as the arts of divination, alchemy, methods to achieve immortality etc. were called the doctrine of Huang-lao *15 i.e. a study of the Yellow Emperor and Lao-Tzu. The Huang-lao doctrine included on the one hand pre-Ch'in Confucianism recast in the mould of Yin Yang cosmology and astrology, and on the other hand the doctrines of Lao-tzu and Chuang-Tzu which were also expressed in terms of Yin Yang religion, and which had become a domestic religion before the introduction of Buddhism.

The fundamental aim of the Taoist philosophies *16 is to return to

*13 Huang-ti 黃帝.

*14 An-ch'i Shang 安期生.

*15 Huang-lao Chih-chiao 黃老之教, Chinese domestic religion under the name of 'Huang-lao' during the times of the Ch'in and the Han.

*16 Tao-chia 道家.

one's original nature which is the Tao itself. The Tao of Confucianism is the right way of action, moral, social, political and practical. The Tao of Taoism is practical too, but more metaphysical compared to Confucianism. The Taoists considered Tao as the natural law or the fundamental principle of the universe by which all things are brought into existence. The aim of Taoism is to achieve identification with the Tao. Since the Tao is to be considered eternal, so a person who has achieved union with the Tao will also have achieved eternality.

Lao-tzu says:

'The Tao that can be spoken of is not the eternal Tao.*17
The name which can be named is not the eternal name.'

In the theory of Tao, the idea of the 'Eternal' is always present.

'Which does one love more; fame or one's own life?
Which is more valuable, one's own life or wealth?
Which is worse, gain or loss? He who has lavish desires
will spend extravagantly. He who hoards most will lose
most heavily.
He who knows when to stop is free from danger. Therefore *8
he can long endure.'

The aim of withdrawing from the world back to nature is to enable one's original nature (immortal nature) to identify with the Tao. This concept of Eternality in Taoism has the connotation of metaphysical transcending the material world and identifying with one's original nature which is the Tao.

The Tao is eternal but how can it be achieved? One explanation is given in Lao-tzu as follows:

'Between birth and death man comes into life and goes out
of it to death.
Three out of ten are companions of life.
Three out of ten are companions of death.
And men just passing from birth to death also three out of ten

*17 Ch. I (Lao-tzu).

*18 Ch. 44, (Lao-tzu).

'And for what reason?
 Because man constantly strives to prolong his life.
 I have heard that one who is a good preserver of his
 life will not face tigers or buffaloes, and in fighting
 will avoid weapons of war.
 The wild buffalo cannot butt its horns against him.
 The tiger cannot fasten its claws in him; and the armed
 men cannot thrust their swords into him. And for what
 reason?
 Because in him there is no room for death.*19

During the Han Dynasty like Han Confucianism which was shot through with ideas of the Yin Yang School, so the latter ideas also mingled with Taoism to form a new kind of eclecticism known as Tao-chiao, or the Taoist religion. This became prevalent about the beginning of the 1st century A.D. The Taoist religion adopted the idea of Eternality from Taoism. When this was applied on the physical plane it led to the adoption of the ambition to achieve personal immortality.

The Taoist religion considers that to obtain immortal life, certain undertakings are necessary. First, the body has to be nourished in order to suppress the causes of decrepitude and to create an embryo endowed with immortality. Second, the spirit has to be nourished and this involves meditation and concentration.

Immortality can be achieved by controlling the material constituent elements which nourish one's body. There are some exercises which have to be practised regularly. They include dietary practice, to absorb the essence of gold or jade, enabling the body to be immortal. To nourish one's spirit, it is necessary to aid concentration and meditation by control of breathing in order to cultivate inner vision. Then will immortality be given birth to within one's physical body.

The religious Taoists believe that if the above practices are carried out properly, one's body will certainly become immortal.

*19 Ch. 55, Lao-tzu.

It will also become light enough to enable one to fly, and that one will become identical with the divinities. Together with these exercises, religious Taoists make sacrifice to and worship the Yellow Emperor and Lao-tzu.. This was the religious setting in China during the Han Dynasty, at the time when Buddhism was brought from India.

B. THE INTRODUCTION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

1. The Emperor Ming's Dream

China's first contact with Buddhism began with Emperor Ming of the Han Dynasty (158-75 A.D.) of whom it is told that he had the following dream:

'One night in a dream Emperor Ming saw a golden deity flying in front of his palace. Next morning he asked his ministers to explain the identity of this deity. One of them, Fu Yi, replied that he had heard that there was a sage in India who had attained salvation and was designated "The Buddha". He was able to fly, and his body had a golden hue. Fu went on to say that the deity seen in the dream was this Buddha. The Emperor Ming accepted his explanation and dispatched envoys to Scythia to learn more about this sage and his teaching. His envoys came back, bringing with them the Sutra in forty-two chapters, accompanied by two Indian monks, Kāśyapa Matanga and Dharmaratna.*20

Emperor Ming built the White Horse Monastery as a place of worship and to house the monks and sacred writings.*21 Although the White Horse Monastery is considered to be the first Buddhist temple, the two monks the first Buddhist monks, and the forty-two chapters the first translation of Buddhist writings in China, there is further evidence that Buddhism had already been heard of in China before this time. In

*20. Chia-yeh Mo-t'eng and Chu Fa-lan 迦葉摩騰与竺法蘭. CHTC, part II LXXII, pp. 30123-30132.

*21 Mou-tzu Li-huo-lun HMC, I, p.1. (Mou-tzu 'On the Setting of doubts', collected essays on Buddhism) and Hou Han Shu (The History of late Han Dynasty) Vol. 130. cf. Zürcher's pp. 12-13, Tan's History, pp. 76-77

Yuan Hung's work entitled 'Wei-lueh' ^{*22} it says:

'Formerly in the first year of the Yuan-shou era (2.B.C.)
under the reign of Han Ai-ti ^{*23} the official scholar Ching-lu ^{*24}
received from Yi-tsun, Ambassador of King of the Yueh-chih ^{*25}
the oral transmission of Buddhist scriptures.'

If this is so, it means that the knowledge of Buddhist scriptures had
already been introduced to China before the White Horse Monastery was
built. Similar reference can be seen in the history of later Han
Dynasty as well.

'An edict of Emperor Ming declared that "Prince Yin of
Ch'u esteemed highly the profound sayings of the Huang-lao
and the virtuous deeds of the Buddha. Prince Yin practised ^{*26}
fasting for three months to worship Buddha and divinities."

Prince Yin was a brother of Emperor Ming and was made duke in A.D.39
by an edict of Emperor Ming. This is the earliest mention of a Buddhist
community in China, which was already observing the practice of fasting
and worshipping at the time of Emperor Ming's dream, which was considered
as the beginning of the introduction of Buddhism into China.

In a memorial which was written by Hsiang K'ai ^{*27} in 166 A.D. to
Emperor Huan ^{*28} it was stated as follows:

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- *22 Yuan Hung, Wei-lueh 袁宏, 魏略. Hsi-jung chuan 西戎傳
(Quoted by P'ei Sung-chih's on the San-kuo chih, published
429 A.D.) KSCV, pp 351-356. x
- *23 Han Ai-ti 漢哀帝.
- *24 Ching-lu 景廬.
- *25 Yueh-chih 月氏王使 Yi-tsun 伊存. x
- *26 The Biography of Prince Yin of Ch'u, Hou Han Shu 後漢書, 楚王英傳.
Hou Han-chi (The records of later Han Dynasty) pp. 4-5, KSCPTSS
TC 370. X. pp. 121-122; T'ung yung-t'ung's History, pp. 53-55.
- *27 Hsiang-kai 襄楷.
- *28 Han Huan Ti 漢桓帝.

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'I have also heard that in the palace there are established altars to Huang-Lao and the Buddha. This doctrine (the doctrine of Huang-Lao and Buddha) is one of purity and Emptiness, it venerates "wu-wei" (non-activity), it values life and hates killing, it diminishes the desires and banishes excesses ...' *29

In the eyes of the Chinese of that time, Buddhism was but one of Huang-Lao's teachings. The Buddha was considered as one of the divinities, similar to one of their ancestors such as Huang-ti or Lao-tzu, etc. Moreover, most of the Indian monks who came to China to spread the knowledge of Buddhism and to translate the scriptures into Chinese were looked upon as technicians of the arts of divination. This can be seen in "Biographies of Eminent Monks". *30

'An-ch'ing, also named Shih-kao *31 is intelligent and diligent in study. He knows foreign books, cosmology such as the Five Agents, and Seven Luminaries *32 of the dipper, the arts of divination, medical knowledge, even the language of birds and animals. Nothing of these he does not know.' (Written by *33 Hui-chiao, 497-554)

An-ch'ing is considered to be the earliest eminent foreign monk and translator in China. K'ang-seng-hui *34 his contemporary, was an important foreign monk who translated Buddhist sutras into Chinese during this time. An-Shih-kao in the preface of the sutras of An-pan shou-i-ching, K'ang seng-hui described An Shih-kao as follows:

'There is a Bodhisattva called An-Shih Kao, his knowledge is extensive, he knows all the arts of divination, including the law of the movement of the seven dippers, the fortune and misfortune which is caused by influence of the force of wind and air, understands the knowledge of the earth-quake and landslide; he knows acupuncture and the arts of feeling the pulse; he knows how to diagnose illness by judging the face of appearance, and understands all bird and animal languages.' *35

*29 Hou-han shu 後漢書 60.18. T'ung yung-t'ung, 'History', pp. 55-57 See '26'.

*30 Kao-seng Chuan 高僧傳.

*31 An-ching, also named Shih-kao 安清. 字世高.

*32 Five Agents (Wu-hsing 五行), see '6'; Seven Luminaries (Ch'i-yao 七曜) one of the basic concepts of the Yin Yang School.

*33 Hui-chiao, KSC, Vol. I, p. 323.

*34 K'ang-seng-hui 康僧會.

*35 An-nan Shou-i Ching 安南壽一經 (or Ananana) CSTCC YLTTT p. 2. mc yv 162

There is another statement which describes two more contemporary famous foreign monks who were also translators:

'T'an-k'o Ch'a-luo^{*36}, when he was a little boy, was much more intelligent and wise than other people. He memorised poetry or books on a single reading. All cosmic knowledge concerned with wind, clouds, stars, the alternation of day and night, astrological prognostications and texts was fully understood by him.'

'The other, K'ang Sen-hui ... is diligent in his study and earnest in his resolution. He mastered all the meanings of the Tripitaka sutras, and read through all the books of the six classics; he also studied most of the astrological cosmic and prognostic texts ...'^{*37}

All these monks were famous translators at the time of the Han and Three Kingdoms; they all knew something about astrology and cosmology, and were considered masters of divination.

2. The Earliest Buddhist Thought in China

Just as the foreign Buddhist monks were considered as masters of divination or disciples of Huang-Lao while Buddha was worshipped as one of the Taoist divinities, so the main content of Buddhism was thought of as a branch of Huang-Lao's teaching concerning the search for immortality. At first glance the idea of the indestructibility of the self and the circle of rebirth and karma appear to be contradictory. But at first the Chinese had difficulty in understanding the idea of repeated rebirth without some abiding entity linking the different stages. To overcome this difficulty they evolved the concept of 'shen-ling' (神靈) or the Indestructible Soul which is transmitted through successive rebirths. With this modification they found no contradiction between the idea of immortality in Huang-Lao and the teaching of Buddha. This illustrates the process by which most

*36 T'an-k'o Ch'a-luo 曇柯迦羅.

*37 Hui-Chiao, 'Kao Seng-chuan', I, p. 325. (The Biographies of Eminent Monks) ESTCC XIII, 96.

of the translations of Buddhist texts and their Chinese commentaries came to use Taoist terminology. Further light on this process is shed by the 'Hou-Han-shu' and the 'Sutra of Forty-two Chapters' in the following passages:

'Buddhism is a religion in the west, in India. "Buddha" means someone who is enlightened. His teaching teaches one to do good, not to kill or injure living things, especially to purify one's own mind, to dispel evil desires. An adept is called Sramana. Sramana is hsi in Chinese. The meaning of hsi is to dispel desires and to return to a state of Wu-wei (non-activity). Also one's spirit does not perish at death and will be repeatedly given a new form. All good and bad deeds will be given their due reward or punishment in following lives.' They most value doing good and constantly refining their spirits by cultivating insight until they reach non-activity and become Buddhas. The Buddha's body is about sixteen feet high and of a golden hue which shines brightly with a combination of sunlight and moonlight. His manifestations are manifold and he is to be found in all places. So he can reach all things and save all living beings ... His scriptures number several hundred thousand volumes and his theories concentrate on non-action and non-being. Common people found his theory too profound to understand, and could not even guess at its meaning. Lords and Ministers were very frightened by what they heard about what he taught about death and after-life.

The Buddha only took one meal a day, lodging under the tree. This doctrine is one of purity and void; it reveres Wu-wei (Non-activity), it values life and hates killing, it diminishes one's desires and casts excesses away.' *38

Here the non-activity (Wu-wei) and nourishing of the spirit of Huang-Lao are once more clearly manifested, both in respect in theory and ceremonial. What we have is popular Taoism and astrology. Original Buddhist thinking was not accepted until the Three Kingdoms period after the end of Han. So as Hui-chiao wrote in his Kao-seng Chuan:

'In the state of Wei, although Buddhist scriptures are widely circulated, the misunderstanding of Buddhist theory had become customary. There were monks who had never been ordained and who had only shaven heads to distinguish them from the laity. When performing the ceremonies of fasting and confession they imitated the sacrificial rites.' *39

*38 'The Memoires of Hsiang K'ai' (See '29')

*39 Hui-chiao 'Kao Seng-chuan' and Jen Chi-yu, 'The Collected Essays on Buddhism' Vol. I, p. 324.

Although Buddhism in its true form was not accepted during the Han, nevertheless it flourished throughout the whole of China by syncretising with domestic ideas and religion. The evidence can be found in Chinese official historical records of SAN KUO CHIH:

'Chia-jung^{*40} who was in charge of the grain transport in the region of Kuang-ling, Hsia-P'ei and Ping-chang^{*41} in which capacity he actually appropriated the revenues of these three prefectures ... He erected a large Buddhist temple and he had a human effigy made in bronze, the body of which was gilded and dressed in silk and brocade. (At the top of the building) nine layers of bronze scales were suspended, and below there were several storeys with covered ways, which could contain more than three thousand people, who studied Buddhist scriptures. He ordered the Buddhist devotees from the region (under his supervision) and from the adjacent prefectures to listen and to accept the doctrine of Buddha. He exempted them from labour duties in order to make it attractive to them. As a result of this more than five thousand came to the temple from near and far, whenever there was (the ceremony of) "bathing the Buddha". He had always great quantities of wine and food set out (for distribution) and mats were spread along the roads over a distance of several tens of miles. On such occasions some ten thousand people came to enjoy the spectacle and food. The expenses of such a ceremony amounted to many millions.'^{*42}

This text offers a clear description of a Chinese Buddhist temple, gives us a glimpse of popular Buddhism at a rather early date, the organisation of the temple, the numbers of Buddhist devotees, the huge size of the building and the large monastic community which probably consisted of Chinese monks. But the fact that wine was offered to the participants on festive occasions indicates that the Buddhism practised at Chai-jung's monastery was not pure Buddhism. These descriptions illustrate the saying of Hui-Chiao:

'Misunderstanding of Buddhist theory had become customary. There were monks who had never been ordained and who had only shaved heads to distinguish them from the laity.'^{*43}

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- *40 Chia-jung 乍昌, San Kuo Chih 三國志.
- *41 Kuang-ling, Hsia-P'ei, Ping-chang 廣陵, 下邳, 平昌.
- *42 San kuo chih (Wu-chih), IV, p. 515; Tung yung-t'ung's 'History' pp. 71-73.
- *43 See '39'

3. Initial Response in China to the introduction of Buddhism

Since the Buddha and Huang-lao were to be worshipped at the same altar as equal deities, it can be seen that none of the ideas of Buddhism had been properly understood or described. There was no criticism nor reaction to it until that found in the treatise 'Hua-hu Ching' at the end of Han. In the 'Hua-hu Ching', it says:

'Lao-tzu went and entered the land of the barbarian to *44 become the Buddha.'

'The Buddhist sutras are on the whole similar in content to the Chinese Canon of Lao-tzu. This is because when Lao-tzu was able to get through the passes in the west and reached *45 India, he converted the barbarians into Buddhists.'

The appearance of Hua-hu Ching indicates that by this period Buddhism was popular enough to attract the public and to cause the domestic tradition to take notice of it and react to it. But the reaction was only at the practical level among the traditionalists. No criticism which concerns Buddhist theory can be seen in Hua-hu Ching, since Buddhist thinking was not understood by the Chinese people at that time.

4. The First Acceptance and Defence - Mou-tzu's On the Settling of Doubts

Mou-tzu's Li-huo Lun is a book consisting of 37 chapters which were written as a sort of defence of Buddhism. Its author was called Mou ^{Yung} *46 who wrote at the end of the Han dynasty. The main body of the treatise is in the form of question and answer. The chief questions are as follows:

*44 See '31'

*45 P'ei Sung-chih 'San Kuo Chih' (The Commentary on the Three Kingdoms) quoted by P'ei-tzu-yeh in KSC; 'Taishō issikyō' VI, 152. cf. Zürcher's pp. 430-31.

*46 Mou Yung 牟融.

- (i) What does the term 'Buddha mean?
- (ii) If the teaching of the Buddha is so venerable and great, then why did the ancient Chinese sages Yao, Shun, Duke Chou, and Confucius not practise it?
- (iii) By shaving their heads, are not the Buddhist monks being unfilial to their ancestors?
- (iv) How does the Buddha know that when a person dies, he becomes reborn into another life?

In answer to the first question:

'The "BUDDHA" is one who is awakened, endowed with supernatural powers, and untouched by fire, weapons, or impurities; while "The Tao" is interpreted as that which guides man to the realm of non-activity, *47 or Wu-wei.'

In answer to the second question, Mou-tzu says:

'Books are not necessarily the words of Confucius; a remedy is not necessarily prepared by P'ei-Ch'ia (the most famous doctor of the fifth century B.C. in China). If a book is in accord with what is just, one follows it; if a medicine cures, it is good. The virtuous man accepts all these things to sustain him ... Yao rendered homage to Yin Chou, Shun to Wu Ch'eng, Chou-kung (duke Chou) to Lu Wang and Confucius to Lao-tan (Lao-tzu). But none of them is mentioned in the seven classics. Now these masters are all sages, but comparing them with the Buddha is like comparing a white deer to a unicorn; a swallow to a phoenix. If Yao Chun, Duke Chou and Confucius accepted these as master, how much more should they accept and not reject as master the Buddha with his major and minor marks, gift of metamorphosis and his supernatural limitless powers. The five classics render homage to justice, but there are things not found there. If the Buddha is not found there, is that ground for suspicion?'

In answer to the third question, Mou-tzu uses a story to explain the filial conduct:

'There was a father and a son who were crossing a river by boat. Midway, the father fell into the water. The son pulled his father aboard the boat, then turned him upside down to get the water out through his mouth. By so doing he saved his father. Yet nothing could be more unfilial. If the son had insisted on observing filial piety, the father would have drowned. (In the traditional ideas of the Chinese, it was very unfilial-piety to seize and turn his father upside down.'

*47 Wu-wei 無為 (non-action), the borrowed word from Taoism and used for describing 'Nirvāṇa' at that time.

In the answer to the last question about rebirth after death, Mou-tzu explained:

'In death only the material body perishes, but a soul or spirit remains to live on. The body is like the leaves and roots of plants, while the soul is like the seed. The leaves and roots may wither and perish, but the seeds will continue to live for ever, producing new plants again and again.'

Compared with the 'Huo-hu Ching' which reacted against Buddhism, this shows that Buddhism had developed to a certain degree in China during the Han period. Mou-tzu's writings defended and criticised the ideas and practices and native cults and traditional Confucianist dogmas. It may be considered to be proof that the spirit of independent development had taken place in Chinese thinking during the Han dynasty, while the teaching of Huang-lao was still very much in vogue.

5. The Form of Expression of Buddhism during the Han Dynasty

Mou-tzu's treatise is the first defence of Buddhism in Chinese. In his writing, Mou-tzu described the meaning of Buddha:

'Buddha is one who is awakened and endowed with supernatural power'
'untouched by fire and sword'
'guides men to the Tao'
'to the realm of Wu-wei' etc.

All these terms were in popular usage to describe the arts of divination of Huang-lao's doctrine in the Han dynasty. Although Mou-tzu's work is the first in the history of independent Buddhism in Chinese thinking, it still did not show understanding of Buddhism as it really is and Mou-tzu's work does not have its own terms or words to express itself or to describe the ideal state of 'Nirvāṇa'; it has still to borrow the word 'Wu-wei' from Taoism.

*48 Seng-yu, 'Hung-ming Chi' 34卷111 (The Collected Essays on Buddhism) TS, LII, p, 2.

As it has been mentioned above, the terms of words which were used to explain Buddhism in China were all borrowed from the terminology and ideas of Yin Yang Confucianism or Taoism. Since Buddhism was only considered to be another aspect of the Huang-lao doctrine or another kind of astrology, no Buddhist teaching was understood at that period, and so did not develop any way of expressing itself.

CHAPTER FOUR

GROWTH AND DOMESTICATION

THE INITIAL CONTACT AND THE MODE OF EXPRESSION OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT DURING THE CHIN DYNASTIES

A. The Popularity of Metaphysical Learning and 'Pure Conversation'1. The Popularity

The Han Dynasty was the period in which the study of the apocryphal and prognosticative texts and the religion of Huang-lao was most prevalent. A later development was a revival of Taoism in the Wei-ch'in dynasties.*1

Chin X

This revival of Taoism was known as 'Hsüan-hsüeh' and 'Ch'ing-T'an'.*2 Such learning occurs in the thought of Lao-tzu, for instance in which he regarded the Tao as the 'Hsüan of Hsüan' (the metaphysic of metaphysics).^{*3} Scholars of the time expressed themselves in metaphysical terms and in conversation concerned with the thought of Taoism. This style of expression is called 'Pure Conversation'.

The most outstanding contemporary scholars were: Wang Pi, Ho Yen, Kuo Hsiang, and Hsi K'ang.*4 The contents and the popularity of Hsüan-hsüeh and its Pure Conversation can be seen in historical records:-

'In the year of Cheng-shih^{*5} of the Wei Dynasty, Ho-Yen, Wang Pi and other scholars wrote commentaries on Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu's theories. They considered that Wu-wei (Non-being) as the ultimate reality of all beings (which is YU-WEI). WU is the mother of all beings on which Yin and yang are dependent^{*6} and in which they manifest themselves.'

*1 Hou Wai-lu 侯外廬 et al., 'Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih', III, pp. 263-306; Fung's 'A History of Chinese Philosophy'

*2 玄學與清談 Ibid, pp. 77-94.

*3 玄之又玄 Lao-tzu, ch. 1.

*4 王弼, 何晏, 向秀, 郭象, 嵇康.

*5 正始之音

*6 Ch'in-shu, Biography of Wang-yen 王衍傳, III, p. 75.

'All forms of all things are derived from Wu, and because of it (Wu), the virtuous men established and developed themselves and the weak men (managed to) survive, and so the use of the WU-WEI is unlimited ...' *7

'...Wei-chia' frequently asked Lo-Kuang about the existence of dreams. Kuang replied: "It is thinking." Chia said: "It is a state in which one's spirit and body can contact each other. How can dreaming possibly be thinking?" Kuang replied: "Because dreaming is caused by thinking." Chia thought about what Kuang had told him for a whole month, but did not comprehend what Kuang had said, and he fell ill by thinking too much about the problem ...' *8

The great interest in Pure Conversation and its popularity can be seen more clearly in the following statements: -

'When scholar Wei lectured on the theory of Tao, the audience was convinced and paid homage to him three times ... Scholar Wei-chia had understood "Ming-li" (The principle of names) when he was young. Wei completely went through the theories of Lao-tzu and Chunag-tzu ... He usually discussed with Wang Tun overnight or talked for the whole day, and eventually fell ill as a result.' *10

Pure Conversation not only flourished in scholars' discussions but also was popular among ministers and high officials as well:

'General Yin *11 and Prime Minister Wang Tu *9 called a meeting to which scholars and the highest of the land came. They were the Duke Huan-wan, officials Wang Mong, Wang Ku, Mr. Shih Hsi etc. The Prime Minister stood up and said: "Let us discuss truth and analyse metaphysical theory." The Pure Conversation continued between them until dawn. The Prime Minister and General Ying questioned and answered each other on their theories ... The Prime Minister eventually sighed "All speeches were not fully understood, because the former scholars and teachers had failed to comprehend basic principles and could not give satisfactory explanations. Now we fully understand because you have made the points so clearly that you are the voice of our time. Next morning, the Duke Huan-wan told other officials and friends: "Last night I heard the Pure Conversation between General Ying and the Prime Minister. It was very interesting and wonderful indeed." *12

*7 Ibid, p. 75

*8 Hou Wai-lu et al. 'Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih', III, p. 76; The Biography of Yüan-kuang, SSHY XXXVI.

*9 王導

*10 See '8'

*11 殷將軍

*12 The Chapter of Literature, SSHY.

The foregoing quotations demonstrate that metaphysical conversation was popular, and scholars and officials, and even the Prime Minister, were deeply absorbed in it.

2. The Reason for this Popularity

Why did Hsüan-hsüeh and its expression 'Pure Conversation' become so popular in the time of Wei-Ch'in? There were two main causes. Firstly, and historically speaking, it should be realised that at the end of the Han, China was divided into three kingdoms. As a result of continuing warfare and repeated floods and droughts, society was in confusion and disorder.^{*13} People were suffering and the population was reduced to its lowest point.^{*14} Scholars withdrew themselves, and sought freedom and security. The spirit of the time was such that the thinking of Taoism with its key idea of returning to nature where there is peace and non-action, became popular. Also, scholars at that time preferred to use insight and be spiritually free rather than to involve themselves with politics and so endanger themselves. And also this disorder and confusion gave an opportunity for the revival of Taoism.

Secondly from the philosophical point of view, another main cause of the blossoming of 'Pure Conversation' was the 'BURNING of the Classics' by the Ch'in dynasty. During the period of the Han most Chinese people had to make great efforts to re-write the works of Confucius and the commentaries. As this process developed, eventually, two hundred thousand words were used to comment on the names 'YAO' and 'SHUN', which had been mentioned in Confucius' sayings. Such tedious and endless studies in Confucianism had been accumulating like a heavy weight on the Chinese mind during the Wei-Chin dynasties; until it became difficult for them to go further, and they had to find a way out.

*13 Hou Wai-lu et al, 'Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih', III, pp. 38-45.

*14 Fan Wen-lan, 'Chung-kuo t'ung-shih chien-pen', III, pp. 427 — 434. Ch'in-su, XL, p. 16.

They eventually turned their attention to the spontaneous (naturalism) of Taoism, to set their spirit free, to help them recover their own equilibrium, and to sharpen their imagination. By free discussions and Pure Conversation on the subject of Taoist metaphysics they freed themselves from the rigid studies of Confucianism. An instance of this type of thought is reflected in the saying of T'ao-Yuan-ming, one of the famous contemporary poets:

'The gentleman who called himself "FIVE WILLOWS" liked to read books very much, but he never gave much study to details.' *15

This characteristic of Mr. FIVE WILLOWS illustrates the spontaneous thinking of Taoism and the free and easy spirit of the time.

3. Facets (or Terminology) of Taoism most concerned with Buddhism

WU and YU, WU-WEI and YU-WEI, and CH'I-WU are the three main concepts of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu, and were discussed and developed by the Wei-Chin thinkers. They were also borrowed to explain early Buddhism in China.

(i) Wu and Yu. WU means non-being, or non-existence, and is opposite to YU which means BEING, or EXISTENCE. According to Taoism, 'Tao' is WU (non-being), unnamed, not an object, but the origin of all beings. It exists everywhere without having subjectivity or objectivity. It is the source of creation. Yu is the very beginning of subjects and objects. As Lao-tzu said:

'The nameless is the origin of universe. The named is the mother of all beings.' *16

'The Tao produced the one (BEING). The One produced the two (Subjects and objects). The two produced the three, and the ten thousand beings ...' *17

*15 Tao Yüan-ming 陶淵明, 'Biography of Mr. Five Willows', Chinese Classic Essays.

*16 Lao-tzu, ch. I.

*17 Ibid. ch. 41

The scholars of Wei-Chin period adopted this idea and went a step further to give it a new meaning, such as Kuo-Hsaing's commentary on Chuang-tzu, which says:

'Tao is everywhere, but having no being. It is NON-BEING.'

'... In existence, what came first? It was BEING. We say that Yin and Yang are prior to all beings, but Yin and Yang can say that 'TZU-JAN' (Nature) is prior to beings and all existence, and implies the nature of beings. ... We may say that Tao is prior to beings, but Tao has no being. Since it has no being how can it be prior to beings? We do not know what is prior to BEING, but life goes on, BEING and NON-BEING exist spontaneously. There is no creation.' *18

Lao-tzu's thought considered that BEING came from NON-BEING which is something; Kuo Hsaing's view is that NON-BEING is really nothingness.

In contrast to Kuo Hsiang's view another famous contemporary thinker Wang Pi insisted that NON-BEING is the real source of BEING and beings. Wang Pi said:

'All things come from BEING, and the origin of BEING is NON-BEING. In order to fully comprehend being, it is necessary to return to the origin which is NON-BEING.' *19

The ideas BEING and NON-BEING had become a part of the popular subjects being discussed in 'Pure Conversation'. In the eyes of scholars and monks these two ideas were identical to the Buddhist concepts of EMPTINESS and PHENOMENA (Form). This will be discussed later.

(11) WU-WEI and YU-WEI

Other popular concepts of the time are those of WU-WEI and YU-WEI, which came from Lao-tzu:

'... Therefore a sage manages affairs without action, and preaches doctrines without words.' *20

*18 Kuo-hsiang, 'Chuang-tzu chu' (Commentary on Chuang-tzu), III, p. 15.

*19 Wong Pi 王弼, 'Lao-tzu hsiang-pen' (Commentary on Lao-tzu, Part I) ch. 1.

*20 Ibid. ch. 39

'The cunning ones avoid action; by acting without action,*21 all things will be in order.'

'When one desires to take over something, I see that one will not succeed. (The nature of) the universe is a spiritual thing and should not be acted on. He who acts (on it) harms himself. He who tries to hold (some- *22 thing) loses.'

'Non-being penetrates that in which there is no space; through this I know the advantage of taking no action.' *23

'Few people in the world can understand the principle which is without words and the advantages of taking no action.' *24

'He who takes action fails;; he who grasps things loses. For this reason sages take no action and therefore do not fail. Grasp nothing and therefore do not lose anything.' *25

According to Lao-tzu, Non-action (WU-WEI) means taking no action, not interfering, but letting things go according to their own nature, manipulating themselves. In contrast to non-action, there is ACTION (YU-WEI)*26 which is the opposite to the natural and is artificial. In other words, NON-ACTION means that things exist in themselves.

(iii) The Idea of CH'I-WU (The equality of things. 齊物)

The idea of Ch'i-wu is also one of the favourite concepts of the 'Dark Learning' and it is an expression used in Pure Conversation. Some of the traces of Ch'i-wu can be found in I-Ching, and the Chung-yung.

This idea in the thought of Wei-Chin dynasties was really inherited from Chuang-tzu since he had emphasised the equality of all things. The scholars of the Wei Chin dynasties mainly

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- *21 Ibid, Ch. 40
 - *22 Ibid, Ch. 42
 - *23 Ibid, Ch. 43
 - *24 Ibid, ch. 63
 - *25 Ibid, Ch. 64
 - *26 See chapter II (of this article)

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expressed their points of view on this idea and commented on Chuang-tzu's treatise 'On the Equality of Things'.

Chuang-tzu equalises 'Large' and 'Small':

'There is nothing in the world larger than the tip of a hair, and the (Great) mountain T'ai is (not large but) tiny.' *27

'Long' and 'Short' of life span:

'It does not matter how long one's lifetime is; it is no different from the lifetime of a dead baby; therefore the old man P'eng^{*28} although he lived eight hundred years, he can still be considered to be the same as the dead baby.' *29

All material things and human beings are equalised:

'Heaven and earth were born at the same time as me and are part of the same body. We have already become one; so how can I say anything but say that we are one.'

'Right' and 'Wrong' and 'True' and 'False' are equalised:

'How can Tao be so obscure that there should be no distinction between truth and falsehood? How can speech be so obscure that there should be no distinction between right and wrong? Where can you go and find Tao not to exist? Where can you go and find speech is impossible? Tao is obscured by petty arguments and speech is obscured by flowery expressions. Therefore, controversies arose between Confucianists and Taoists, each school regarding as right what the other considered as wrong, and regarding as wrong what the other considered as right. There is no better way than to use the Light of Nature.' *30

The distinction between 'This' and 'That':

'There is nothing that is not 'That' and there is nothing that is not 'This' ... Therefore I say that the 'That' is produced by the 'This', and the 'This' is produced by the 'That'. This is mutual production.' *31

*27 Kuo-hsiang, 'Chuang-tzu chu ...', I, pp. 45-46; KHCPTSSPC 'Chuang-tzu chi-chih', II, p. 13-14.

*28 Pen[†]-tsu 彭祖

*29 KHCPTSSPC. 'Chuang-tzu chi-chih', II, pp. 13-15.

*30 Ibid.

*31 Ibid.

'... Nevertheless, where there is life, there is death, and there is death where there is life. When there is possibility there is impossibility, and when there is impossibility, there is possibility. Because of the right there is wrong and because of the wrong there is right. The sage does not proceed along these lines (of right and wrong, and so forth) but illuminates light with nature, this is reason.'

*32

From the viewpoint of Chuang-tzu things are not only relative, they are identical, since opposites produce each other and affect each other.

Up to the time of Wei-Chin scholars discussed and commented on this idea, and developed it a step further. Thus Ch'i-wu became one of the main subjects of Pure Conversation. Kuo-Hsiang, who was regarded as the best commentator on Chuang-tzu said:

'We can best show there is no distinction between 'Right' and 'Wrong' by setting one thing against the other. In so doing, we see that all things agree in that they consider themselves to be 'right' and the other to be 'wrong'. Since each agrees that all the others are 'wrong', therefore there can be no 'right', and since they all agree that they themselves are 'right' therefore there can be no 'wrong'. How can it be shown that this is so? If there is absolute 'right' in the world there should be none that consider it to be 'wrong'. If the 'wrong' is really absolutely 'wrong' there should be none that consider it to be 'right'. The fact that there are uncertainties between right and wrong, and a confusion in distinctions, shows that the distinctions between right and wrong are due to bias and all things are really in agreement. In our observation, we see this truth everywhere ... All things function according to their own nature and express themselves accordingly. There is no distinction between 'right' and 'wrong'.'

*33

To sum up, the ideas of Ch'i-wu mean that although there are myriads of things and forms, they affect each other in many ways according to their own nature, which is WU (Non-being). Therefore things are equal by nature, and there is no differentiation between one thing and the other.

As the Chinese had these traditional concepts of Ch'i-wu, Yu-wu,

*32 Ibid.

*33 Kuo-hsiang, 'Chuang-tzu chü .', I, pp. 45-46.

Yu-wei and Wu-wei in their mind, they were easily attracted by and interested in Buddhist Prajñā theories which described all things as phenomena, unreal and empty by nature. All things are eventually equal since all share the same level of EMPTINESS. Thus the thought of Prajñā and the metaphysical learning of Taoism developed harmoniously, as did the friendship of Chinese monks and scholars; each influenced the other.

B. The Intimate Relationship between Famous Scholars and Eminent Monks

During the periods of Wei-Chin, monks and scholars had a very intimate relationship. Firstly, they were intimate friends. Secondly, their thoughts and teachings were close and inseparable. This intimate relationship gave rise to the mixture of Taoism and Buddhism.

The close contacts between contemporary scholars and monks are illustrated as follows:

'Po Fa-tsu is intelligent and has natural ability and no-one can be compared with him ... He deeply studies the Prajna sutras, and absorbs very profound principles from them ... He discusses Taoism quite often (with contemporary high officials and scholars when it is a quiet night or tranquil morning.) At that time the western court had just been established, and there were many men of great ability; magistrates and gentlemen of eloquence, all acknowledging his far-reaching intelligence.'^{*34}

'Chih Hsiao-lung, the monk, Yüan Chan, Yu Kai^{*35} and the other five scholars were very close friends and were called^{*36} "The Pa-ta" (the eight intelligent ones).

'The monk, Chih Tao-lin, and General Yin went together to the mansion of Prime Minister Wang. The Prime Minister said to them: "Let us try to hold a debate; but in discussing the theme of TALENTS and NATURE, General Yin's ability is as impregnable as the Hsiao-han Pass. You, sir, must be careful!" At first the monk, Chih Tao-lin broached a different subject to distract him, but later Chih Tao-lin walked unaware into Yin's trap. The Prime Minister patted Chih Tao-lin's shoulder and smiled, saying, "This is really^{*37} his forte; how could you ever compete with him?"'

*34 KSC. Biography of Po Fa-tsu 帛法祖傳 IV, p. 350

*35 支孝龍, 阮瞻, 庾凱

*36 Hou Wai-lu et al. 'Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih', III, p. 423.

*37 SSHY, The Biography of Chih Tao-lin 支道林傳 IV, pp. 348-349.

The above anecdotes illustrate that the monks, noblemen and scholars were intimate friends. Their manners and interests were similar. They were adept in 'Pure Conversation'.

The teachings of Taoism and Buddhism were even more close and inseparable than the friendship of monks and scholars.

'The monk, Po Fa-tsu excelled in most of the secular learning (of Taoism and Confucianism). He also had a thorough understanding of Classical texts.'

*38

'The monk, Chu Fa-ya in his youth had excelled in secular studies. When he grew up, he became well-versed in Buddhism. Young scholars of the aristocratic families came to him for information and instruction. Since his followers were also well-versed in secular studies, but had not yet become conversant with the principles of Buddhism ... Chu Fa-ya took the Prajñā sutras and compared them with the secular literature of the time in order to clarify their meaning. By drawing parallels with the ideas of native thought and Buddhist concepts he was able to make it easier for people to understand the meanings of Buddhism. This technique is called "Borrowing Terminology" or "Matching Meaning".'

*39

The monk, Hui-yüan at an early age gained a comprehensive knowledge of the six classics and especially excelled in the literature of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu ... When he was twenty-four, he attended a sermon where guests who listened to the lecture on the sutras raised an objection against the meaning of the REALITY of objects. The debate lasted some time but the audience's doubts and lack of understanding became deeper. Then Hui-yüan adapted a corresponding idea from Chuang-tzu by way of analogy, and so the confused audience were able to grasp the concept.'

*40

C. The Six Schools of Prajñā Thought

The six schools were: the school of Pan-wu, the school of Chi-se; the Shih-han, the Huan-hua, the Hsin-wu and the Yüan-hui.

*41

*38 See '31' (& '29')

*39 Ibid, Biography of Chu Fa-ya 竺法雅 VI, p. 363.

*40 KSC. Biography of Sik Hui-yüan 釋慧遠 VI, p. 358.

*41 The names of the Six Schools are listed in Seng-jui's introductory passage to 'Hsu fa-lu' 續法論 found in Po-chang's work in the CSTCC collected during the Liang Dynasty. This book had been lost, but the passage and lists were quoted by Yuan-K'ang 元康 in his commentary on a passage in Hui-ta's 惠達 introduction of Ch ao-lun. cf Liebenthal's 'Ch ao-lun' pp. 133-134.

The master, Tao-an^{*42} the founder of the School, said:

'When the Buddha appeared in this world he proclaimed "NON-BEING" as the main tenet of his teaching. All the profound *Vaipulya* sūtras emphasised that the five skandas were originally non-being. There had been speculation for a long time that NON-BEING had preceded the very beginning of all things. "Emptiness" is the source of all existence. If people can emerge from the state of "BEING" into "NON-BEING" they become free.'

Tao-an's view clearly reflects his Taoist background, and so 'NON-BEING' and 'EMPTINESS' were considered to be identical. These are the main ideas of the Pen-wu School.

(ii) The School of Chih-se^{*44}

Chi Tao-lin, the founder of the School, said:

'Beings are conditioned - they do not exist by themselves. As they do not exist by themselves, beings are empty. But beings are different from EMPTINESS (since they are only conditioned to be empty). Likewise, Non-being is conditioned, it does not exist by itself. As non-being does not exist by itself, Non-being is not non-being itself. Thus non-being is no other than Being, and so, Emptiness is no other than being.'

This school identified Non-being, and Emptiness with Being. In the eyes of this school, the concept of EMPTINESS in the sutras has the same meaning as BEING in Taoism, and implies that there is no such thing as EMPTINESS.

(iii) The School of Shih-han

The representatives of this school are the Monks Yü Fa-kai and Chi Tao-lin.^{*46} Ch'i Tao-lin said:

'The whole universe is the abode in which we live and our life-span is like a dream in a long dark night. The Consciousness is the subjectivity of the great dream of our lives. All objects we have seen, are all in this great

*42 道安本無宗。

*43 Chi-tsang 'Chuan-kuan lun-su' (*Mādhyamika Karikas*) TS. LXV, p. 29.

*44 Tan-chi 曇濟 KSCH, 24. MSCH, 16, 5. T'ang (1938) p. 721.

*45 Chih Tao-lin, 'Chi-se yu-hsüan lun' (On Wondering about the Profound Meanings of Chi-se) TS, LXV, p. 94; Chi Miao-kuan chang 集妙觀章 (The Essays on Perfect Meditation or Insight) TS LXV, p. 152.

*46 于法開, 支道林, 諸含宗。

dream. As soon as one awakens from this DREAM, the long night grows into dawn, then all delusions and the whole universe become Non-being, that is EMPTINESS. At this point of time one's mind is now fully enlightened, and is born from non-being. There is nothing which is not born from it.' *47

The teaching of this school is that Consciousness is not empty, although it is full of illusions, like dreaming. They also believed that NON-BEING and EMPTINESS were the same thing.

(iv) The School of Huan-hua

The monk Tao-i., the founder of this school *48 said:

'All things are like phantoms. This is called "Worldly Truth". The SHEN (one's spirit or soul) which really exists, is not empty. This is called "The Ultimate Truth". If the SHEN (One's spirit) were also empty, to whom could the teaching (of the Buddha) be taught? Who would there be to cultivate or practise himself in Tao? Therefore, we know that the "SHEN" itself is not empty.' *49

The foregoing quotation may explain the immortality of the Soul rather than comment on the concept of EMPTINESS. It is impossible to conceive that this immortality can be EMPTY.

(v) The School of Hsin-wu

Chi Min-tu, Chu Fa-ya and Tao-hen (Liu T-min 劉德民) were the representatives of this school. *50 The main ideas of this school are:

'What we call "BEING" is really appearance, whilst what we call "NON-BEING" actually does not exist and has no appearance. Therefore what does exist is not "NON-BEING" which does not exist. Non-being which does not exist is completely different from BEING which does exist. Hence things are really themselves. Beings are actual BEINGS. When the sutras say that things are unreal and they are empty, it only means that if someone does not pay attention, the external things are empty to him and so his mind is free from attachments. How can we say that the principles of EMPTINESS in the sutras really means that things are naturally empty?' *51

*47 Chi'-tsang, Chung-kuan lun-su. TS XLII, p. 29; Ancho, Chung-lun su-chi (sub-commentary on the 'Chung-kuan lun-su') TS, XLIV, p. 95.

*48 道壹. 幻化宗.

*49 See '47'.

*50 竺法雅. 心無宗.

*51 Chih-tsang, Chung-kuan Lun-su. TS. XLII, p. 94.

The above suggests that things are not empty by nature. They are merely 'Empty' to a particular individual under certain conditions.

(vi) The School of Yüan-hui

Yü Tao-sui^{*52} the founder of this School, said:

'As a result of basic conditioning factors, "BEINGS" came into existence, and this was called "Su-ti (The World Truth)". There is "Non-being" whenever the assembly of conditioning factors disappears. This is called "Chen-ti (The First Truth)". Similarly until clay and wood combine at an early stage to make a house, the house does not really exist; it is merely named "HOUSE" but has no reality. That was why the Buddha told Radha that, when combinations are broken up, there is nothing left but Non-being.'

Together with the other five schools, this School dealt with the problem of 'Appearance' and 'Substance'. This is the same subject as discussed in the Prajñā sūtras. What these schools called 'Appearance' and 'Substance' are the same as BEING and NON-BEING in Taoism but not the same as Prajñā's original concepts of 'Phenomena' and 'EMPTINESS'. The Schools were still clinging to the traditional ideas of 'BEING' and 'NON-BEING' whilst trying to understand and explain the principle of 'EMPTINESS'.

D. 'The Book of Chao': The First Clarification and Modification of Buddhist thought in China.

Seng-Chao who is the author of 'The Book of Chao'^{*54} was born in a poor family and had to earn his living as a copyist. This enabled him to read the classics and history extensively. He was greatly interested in 'Lao-tzu'. After he read the 'Lao-tzu' thoroughly, he said to himself:

'Wonderful it surely is, but it seems as if it had not yet found where our spirits may rest and our sufferings be overcome.'

When later he read the Chinese translation of Vimalakīrti sūtra, he was filled with joy and admiration. He repeatedly read it and thoroughly

*52 于道遠, 緣會宗.

*53 KSC, IV, p. 11; T'ang (1938) p. 165; Zürcher (1959) pp. 140-141.

*54 肇論 ch ao-lun (The book of Ch ao) TS XL pp. 150c-161b. A Collection of Seng-ch ao's treatises on the Prajñā sūtras, composed between 404-414 A.D. cf. Liebenenthal's English translation.

enjoyed it, saying:

'Now I know where my life belongs. Now I see the way for me.'

So he devoted himself to being a monk ... When Kumārajīva went to Ku-tsang^{*55} Chao went there to follow him as his disciple ... Later Kumārajīva went to Ch'ang-an^{*56} Chao returned with him, Seng-ju^{*57} and others to the Hsiao-yao Garden where they helped Kumārajīva to edit the Buddhist translations. Seng-chao frequently approached Kumārajīva with questions about Buddhist study. In this way, he increased his understanding of what he had already acquired through study. After the translation of the Prajñā Sūtras (A.D. 403-404) Chao composed the treatise 'Pan-jo wu-chih lun (On Prajñā) a work of over two thousand words. He handed it to Kumārajīva who read it, saying to Chao:

'My understanding does not yield to yours but your phrasing is superior.'

After this Chao wrote three other treatises: 'Pu-chen k'ung lun (On The EMPTINESS of The UNREAL)^{*59}, 'Wu-pu-chien lun (On Time), and 'Nei-p'an wu-ming lun (On Nirvāṇa). When Kumārajīva read the 'Pu-chien-k'ung lun' (On EMPTINESS of the Unreal)^{*59} Kumārajīva sighed and was full of admiration and recognised Chao as the first in China to understand the principle of EMPTINESS. Chao died in A.D. 414 in his thirty-first year.^{*60}

1. The First Radical Critique of the Misunderstood Buddhist Thought, the First Exposition of Chinese Buddhism

(a) The critique

"Pu-chen-k'ung lun" both criticised the views of the Six Schools and showed an understanding of Chao's Prajñā principles.

First he criticised the view of the School of Hsin-wu:

*55 姑藏.

*56 長安.

*57 僧叡.

*58 P'an-ju wu-chih lun般若無知論(On Prajna)

*59 不真空論 (On the Unreal) 物不遷論 (On Time) 涅槃無名論 (On Nirvāṇa)

*60 KSC, ch. 6, TS I pp. 365-366; T'ang (1938) pp. 328-339. Fung Yu-land's History, ch.VII, pp. 676-677.

'The School of Hsin-wu says that only if one does not pay any attention to things, Will things be empty to one. To one who pays no attention, things will be empty, but in fact things are still there, but not necessarily empty. This view of this school is quite right about the tranquility of the mind but is wrong in failing to understand the principle of the EMPTINESS of the nature of things.' *61

Secondly, he criticised the School of Chi-se as follows:

'The School of Chi-se explains that BEING and NON-BEING are dependent on external causes and conditions for their existence. Therefore although they are called BEING or NON-BEING they have no entity. They are conditioned to be empty. In fact, when we talk about BEING, there is no need to wait until it has been conditioned in order to define it.' *62

From Chao's point of view, what is the real meaning of EMPTINESS? In criticising the thought of the six contemporary Schools, he stated that the 'UNREAL' is the key point to explain EMPTINESS, as follows:

'The Mo-ho-yen lun *63 says: "BEINGS have neither the characteristic of existence nor the characteristic of non-existence." The Chung-lun *64 also says, "BEINGS are neither existent nor non-existent." Does it mean that human beings should blot out all things, and be in a state without sound, or form, before they can define the truth of existence or non-existence?' *65

'The Tao-hsing ching *66 says: "The mind is neither existent nor non-existent." The Chung-lun says: "Beings are non-existent because their creation depends on external conditions, and so, by being created they are not non-existent. If we examine this carefully, we will find it to be true. The reason for this is that if the existence of beings was real existence, this existence should always exist independently. It would not depend upon causes and conditions for its existence. Just so, if the Non-existence of Beings was real non-existence, it should be eternally non-existent in itself and should not depend on causes and conditions ...' *67

*61 Ch ao-lun (Pu-chen-kung lung) TS, XL, pp. 152-153a.

*62 Ibid, pp. 152-153a.

*63 摩訶般若行論 (Mahāprajñāparamitā upadeśa) TS, XXV

*64 中論 (Madhyamaka Kārikāh Prajñāparamitā Sūtra) TS, VIII

*65 See '62'

*66 道行經 (Daśasāhasrikā Prajñāparamitā sūtra)

*67 Ibid. pp. 152-154.

'Suppose we say that BEINGS exist but such existence is unreal. Or Suppose we say that they are not real, but phenomena which have already taken shape. In as far as they have taken shape, they are not non-existent. But since they are conditioned, they do not exist by themselves, but only as phenomena. As they are the UNREAL, we may say from this the principle of EMPTINESS should be clear.'

'That is why the Fang-kuang^{*68} says: *All BEINGS are unreal and are only phenomena. They are like a phenomenal man produced by magic. This magical man is not non-existent, but he is not a real man. (He is empty by nature.)"'^{*69}

To sum up, all BEINGS and Non-beings are conditioned, neither really exists alone. As they are the UNREAL they do not have any reality of their own, so we may say that both BEING and NON-BEING are EMPTY by nature. This is Seng-chao's point of view of EMPTINESS and 'The UNREAL' is the key point to the Explanation of the concept of 'EMPTINESS' of Prajñā.

Seng-chao's view was adopted from Nāgārjuna, through Kumārajīva. Chao used the same method as Nāgārjuna, to establish his point of view by using negative terms in order to negate fixed ideas. It was through this door that the Prajñā thought first made contact with the Chinese mind.^{*70}

2. The Modes of Expression of Seng-chao's Thought

(a) The Traces of Taoism

Although Chao's thought absorbed Prajñā thinking, he had to borrow terminology from Taoism to make himself clear. Terminology and quotations of Taoism found in the Pu-chen-k'ung lun are as follows:

*68 放光經 (Pañcaviṃśati Prajñāparamitā sūtra).

*69 Ibid. pp. 152-155.

*70 See chapter II, the section of 'The Idea of Emptiness'.

'TAO - 'Is Tao far away?'*71
 'SAGE' - 'Is SAGE far away?'*72
 'Being' - (YU)*73
 'NON-BEING' - 'WU is used to refer to EMPTINESS)*74
 'Spirit' - (shen) one's own mind
 'Chen-jen' - the perfect one, like Sage or Buddha.
 'Blot out seeing and hearing, and be in a state of having *75
 no sound, form and substance.'

As Taoism was the vogue in China at that time, and Seng-chao himself an adept at explaining the thought of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu there is still much terminology and many quotations to be found from Taoism on Buddhism. Hence Taoist-Buddhist terminology is still one of the features in the Book of Chao.

(b) The Simplification of Nāgārjuna's Two Double Negations

'The Mo-ho-yen says: "All beings should be considered to exist, since they are conditioned. All beings should NOT be considered to exist, since they are conditioned (depend on causes and conditions to have their existence). All NON-BEING should be said to exist since they are conditioned, and finally, all NON-BEINGS should not be said to exist, they are merely conditioned (they do not exist by themselves)."'*76

Such a method of explaining or establishing a point of view negatively by discarding all other points of view, is a common and traditional formula for argument in Nāgārjuna's Śāstras. This method is called the 'four-point-negation'. It refutes an idea

- (i) as being
- (ii) as Non-being
- (iii) as both being and non-being
- (iv) as neither being nor non-being

These four points (or two double-points) have been used hundreds and thousands of times for explaining the EMPTINESS principle from

*71 cf p.1. of this section.

*72 See '61'

*73 See '61'

*74 See '61'

*75 Quotation from Lao-tzu, ch. 12.

*76 Pan-jo wu-chih lun, Chao-lun p.1.

all angles as in Nāgārjuna's numerous sastras, 'The Mahārajñāparamitā-upadesa Sāstra; Madhyamaka-kārikāh' *77

Seng-chao inherited Nāgārjuna's ideas and his logical method, and took two points from the FOUR, to explain the concept of EMPTINESS effectively and clearly. He defined 'EMPTINESS' as 'Neither BEING nor NON-BEING'. His definition of EMPTINESS is only one sentence: 'Like a phenomenal man produced by magic, this phenomenal man is not non-existent, but such a man is unreal.' The treatise 'Pu-chen-k'ung lun' consists of not more than two thousand words but it summarises and explains the meaning of the EMPTINESS in the three hundred large volumes of the Prajñā sūtras so perfectly and clearly, that it was praised by his Indian master Kumārajīva who regarded his ideas as the dawn of understanding of the principle of EMPTINESS in China. Hence Seng-chao's Book is not only the first clarification, but also the first modification of Buddhist thought in Chinese thinking.

(c) The preference for 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' in Seng-chao's writing

Seng-chao wrote 'A Commentary on the Vimalakīrti Sūtra', three treatises: 'Pu-chen-k'ung lun', 'Pan-jo wu-chih lun' and 'Nie-p'an wu-ming lun'; and also 'A Preface on The Sutra of Long Āgama'.

In contrast to Nāgārjuna, who took the Four-points Negations as a weapon to explain EMPTINESS in numerous treatises, Seng-chao only used it to explain briefly the same principle in a simple way. He says:

'The Pu-sa ying-lo ching' *78 says: "When a Bodhisattva preaches sutras there is neither preaching nor non-preaching. (as sutras are neither sutras nor non-sutras). This is called to preach the unpreachable." That was why the young Bodhisattva said with a sigh (of admiration): "The Buddha had said that things were neither BEING nor NON-BEING" because *79 things were conditioned.'

*77 This formula of 'The Four-point negation' for argument can be seen, throughout Nāgārjuna's treatises, such as Mahāprajñāparamitā-upadesa Sāstra, Ts, XXV; Madhyamaka-kārikāh, TS, XXX, Quotations from these Sāstras were also frequently used by Seng-chao.

*78 菩薩瓔珞經 (Bodhisattva-keyura sūtra) TS XLV p. 109a.

*79 Pu-chen-kung lun, Ch'ao-lun TS XLV p. 152

From the above we can see that Seng-chao defined PREACHING as 'NEITHER PREACHING' nor 'NON-PREACHING', but the UNREAL that is the EMPTINESS. Seng-chao's point of view is that preaching and the use of words were all the unreal, and were EMPTY by nature.

Seng-chao also said:

'Final release is beyond words, written teaching and the nameable. That was why Buddha Sākyamuni was silent at Magadha and also that was why Vimalakīrti refused to answer at Vaisali, and that was why Subhuti preached the doctrine of Prajñā without using words. Sakra, the King of Heaven, though hearing nothing, rained flowers. Words were unnecessary because these people knew that ultimate truth is beyond words, and it can only be realised silently in one's own mind. These are silent sermons which cannot be *80 expressed in words.'

'To show the way (to Nirvāṇa) which is beyond words, by using words, is good. But to do without words and to demonstrate the wordless way is better. That is why Bodhisattva Vimalakīrti is the only one who elucidated the wordless truth without words.' *81

The above sayings of Seng-chao showed his preference for wordlessness rather than for words; because he was quite sure that the principles of the sūtras were beyond words, and unnameable, nothing can be added. Even his great master, the Buddha, sometimes had to preach to them without using speech. According to the Prajñā Sūtras, in Seng-chao's eyes, everything is unreal, and is EMPTY. There is neither words nor wordlessness. Seng-chao greatly admired Bodhisattva Vimalakīrti's SILENCE and he was inspired to become a monk immediately after reading the Sutra of Vimalakīrti for the first time; and he said to himself: 'Now I really see the way for me.' *82

As a result of the great respect Seng-chao paid to Vimalakīrti's Silence, this story of Vimalakīrti became very popular and a favourite for nearly nine hundred years in China. The Sanskrit texts of this

*80 Ibid. p. 152.

*81 see '82'.

*82 Wei-mo ching chu 維摩經註 (Commentary on the Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa sūtra), TS XXXVIII. See '60', cf. the beginning of this section.

sūtra were translated repeatedly for at least eight hundred years in more than eight different editions by different scholars in different dynasties. The story of Vimalakīrti can be seen and heard everywhere in Chinese Buddhist history, Chinese literature, paintings, sculptures and poems. One of the outstanding poets in the T'ang dynasty named Wang Wei, alias MO-CHIEH^{*83} has the same name as Vimalakīrti, translated into Chinese. The Chinese mind was very much attracted by the story of Vimalakīrti's Silence.

(d) Seng-chao's Attitude towards 'Simplicity' and 'Silence'

Seng-chao often said that he could not help suggestions in words to show the way for others, although he emphasised that the ultimate truth is beyond words. This attitude towards both 'WORDS' and 'WORDLESSNESS' can be seen in the following quotation:

'But I cannot remain silent; let me, then, employ words to offer some suggestions and try to discuss this principle^{*84} of EMPTINESS.'

'I shall follow Confucius who did not aim at writing a brilliant piece of literature when he composed 'The Wings of the I-ching'^{*85} but only intended to explain the basic^{*86} texts in order to show people the way.'

'... Therefore the sphere of truth exists tranquilly beyond verbal elucidation. How can it be expressed by words and letters? Still I cannot remain silent. Let me employ words^{*87} to offer some clues and try to discuss it.'

'Truly, the wisdom of the sages (Buddhas) is profound, subtle, deeply concealed and difficult to plumb. It is shapeless and beyond speech; it cannot be expressed in words and symbols. Should I employ language to describe it? How dare I say the mind of sages can be described?^{*88} Nevertheless I shall try.'

*83 王維. 字. 摩詰. (701-761 A.D.)

*84 Wu-pu-chien lun TS. XL. p. 151; cf Liebenthal's English translation of 'Ch ao-lun', pp. 46-53.

*85 Shih-i + 17 (Commentary on the I-ching. It was considered to be Confucius' work). See chapter II (of this article).

*86 Nir-p'an wu-ming lun TS. XL. p. 156.

*87 Ibid, p. 153. cf Liebenthal's English translation pp. 65-80.

*88 See '84'

'... However, I cannot let it alone; I must concentrate upon the relation between motion and stillness; and realising that what I am going to say is not final, I *89 shall try to discuss it.'

From the above we can see that although truth is inexpressible, Seng-chao did make an effort to discuss it in words. Such an attitude towards both 'Words' and 'Wordlessness' is another characteristic of Seng-chao's thought. Again, this reminds one of Confucius' and Mencius' behaviour when they reluctantly spoke or argued when it was necessary. This attitude derived from Chinese ethical practice, and also the tradition of 'Going into office when the state is well-governed, and withdrawing from it when the state is ill-governed'. *90 The idea of 'MEAN' in Chinese thought which suggests that one should transcend the two opposite sides and then use the 'MIDDLE WAY' is found in Seng-chao's interpretation of Buddhism.

Seng-chao was admired and recognised as the first person to comprehend the thought of the Prajñā sūtras in China. He summarised the sūtras in brief and concise statements. Seng-chao's treatises thus were the first clarification and simplification of Indian Buddhist treatises. This simplification demonstrates the Chinese characteristic of economy of expression, and it became the pattern for later Buddhist scholars.

We have also seen how Seng-chao criticised the Six Schools and pointed out their misunderstandings of the Prajñā thought. He maintained the original meaning of the Prajñā sūtras, and effected the first contact of the Prajñā thought with Chinese thought. Seng-chao took the ideas straight from India, but his teaching became more ethical; and the meaning of 'NIRVĀNA' became more concerned with this world rather than with the

*89 See Chapter II (of this thesis).

*90 Ibid.

immortal world. The PURE UNDERSTANDING of Prajna sutras became the Wisdom of the sages; 'Buddhas' were called 'Sages'. All these are expressed in the Chinese traditional way of speech. Although the ideas are founded on their Indian origins, most of the Indian characteristics began to disappear as they became sinicized.

E. The Characteristics of the Teaching of the Three Treatises School

1. The Founder and the School

Chi-tsang (549-623) is considered to be the one who first explained and developed Nāgārjuna's doctrine of the Three Treatises in China, by means of the teaching of Kumārajīva and Seng-chao.^{*91} He had commented on those Three Treatises in detail in the same way as Nāgārjuna, who had expressed his principles of the Double-Truth by means of the Four-point Argument. Chi-tsang still further complicated 'Double Truth' into three different levels, as well as borrowing terminologies from Taoism. Chi-tsang's use of Nāgārjuna's polemics declined as soon as he passed away, but the ideas which had had affinity with the Chinese mind survived, and were developed by the school of T'ien-t'ai.

2. The Three Levels of the 'Double Truth' ^{*92}

Chi-tsang made a summary of all his very detailed commentaries on Nāgārjuna's treatises. In this summary his ideas of 'Double-Truth' is explained as follows:

'Our Masters said that the Chung-lun, the Pai-lun, the Tā-chih-tu lun, and the Ssu-erh-men lun are perfect. By becoming versed in these four treatises, all principles of Buddhism may be comprehended. Our master also said that although these four treatises had different names and contents, their purposes in every case was to elucidate the theory of the Double Truth; and to point to the way to avoid the two extremes. If the Double

*91 KSC. The Biography of Chi-tsang TS.L.P,154.

*92 Erh-ti Chang (The Chapter on The Double Truth). TS.XL. pp,91-92.

Truth is comprehended, these four treatises can be clearly understood, but otherwise these treatises will remain obscure. This is the reason why it is necessary to become conversant with the Double Truth. Once it is comprehended, not only will the four treatises become clear, but all the numerous sutras as well. Why? Because it is said that all Buddhas rely on these treatises for explaining their teaching ...*93

In spite of his tendency to go into too much detail on those complex Indian treatises, Chi-tsang reduced them into one main idea of the 'Double Truth'. The simplicity in this mode of thinking, a Chinese characteristic, is immediately apparent.

As has been mentioned before, the Double-Truth of Nagarajna, e.g. the Four-Point Argument, establishes its own points by refuting the four ideas of (1) Being, (2) Non-Being, (3) both Being and Non-Being, and (4) neither Being nor Non-Being. In contrast to Seng-chao, who reduced the four into only two: (1) Being and Non-being, and (2) neither Being nor Non-Being, Chi-tsang complicated and developed the four at three different levels, as follows:

'... The Double-Truth can be expounded at three levels. The first level, describing 'BEING'(YU) is called 'Shih-ti (MUNDANE TRUTH); but NON-BEING is Chien-ti (ULTIMATE TRUTH). Now we come to the second level, which explains that there are two extremes, one of these is BEING, the other NON-BEING, as also is 'PERMANENCE' and 'IMPERMANENCE'. Other extremes are 'BIRTH' and 'DEATH', and 'NIRVANA', 'MUNDANE TRUTH' and 'ULTIMATE TRUTH'. Transcending the extremes in each case is the MIDDLE WAY. This Middle Way is the FIRST TRUTH, all extremes are the 'MUNDANE TRUTH'. And we now reach the SECOND level of the DOUBLE TRUTH.

Since there is a FIRST TRUTH and a MUNDANE TRUTH, we have two further extremes. These two further extremes are called the MUNDANE TRUTH of the third level. When these are transcended we have come to the state of the FIRST TRUTH of the third level of the DOUBLE TRUTH.' *94

The above statement of Chi-tsang can be illustrated by the following table: *95

*93 cf. Fung Yu-lan, A History of Chinese Philosophy, ch. 8, pp. 702-705

*94 Ibid.

*95 Ibid.

	MUNDANE TRUTH	ULTIMATE TRUTH
Level 1	Affirmation: BEING &	Negation: NON-BEING
Level 2	Affirmation: both BEING & NON-BEING &	Negation: Neither BEING nor NON-BEING
Level 3	Affirmation: both the 'DUALITY of BEING and NON-BEING' and the 'DUALITY of neither 'BEING nor NON-BEING' &	Negation: neither the 'DUALITY of BEING' nor the 'DUALITY of neither BEING nor NON-BEING'

From the above we see that while Chi-tsang summarised the principles of Nāgārjuna, he explained the Double-Truth in a more complex way and made the principle become much more abstract in comparison with Seng-chao's method.

3. The Simplicity and Silence

Chi-tsang's attitude towards BEING and NON-BEING is similar to that of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu. He considered that NON-BEING is the source of all beings. According to this way of thinking, all words and spoken doctrines have to be discarded.*96 Chi-tsang himself says:

'All cognitions have to stop, and all written words have to be discarded, whenever the state of ultimate Truth is arrived at.' *97

'In the substance of all things, cognitions and written words are to be discarded ...' *98

'The essence of BEING is beyond words, names come into existence in an attempt to describe it.' *99

'Truth is neither MIDDLE nor NON-MIDDLE but we are compelled to use the word MIDDLE in order to make people understand.' *100

*96 Ibid.

*97 Ibid.

*98 Ibid.

*99 Ibid.

*100 Ibid.

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'Although the essence of the substance of all things is neither BEING nor NON-BEING, as an expedient it is defined as 'MUNDANE' and 'ULTIMATE'. (Erh-i Chang. TS. XL. pp, 91-2)

'As far as I know the Lotus Sūtra says: "This principle is too profound to explain; all speech or written words become silence." The Buddha propounded his nameless and wordless teaching by means of speech and written words. That is why there are so many sūtras of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. The purpose of the teaching of the Buddha and the use of words and names was to help people to understand the true nature of things which is beyond words and names.' (Chung-kuan lun-su. TS. XLII. pp, 1-31)

From the above we can see that Chi-tsang had a preference for 'Simplicity' and 'Silence', although he showed this preference in his treatises he went on to his Double-Truth by discarding the two extremes in a series of negations on different levels. This was really closer to the Indian rather than the domestic Chinese thought. As Chi-tsang followed the point of view of Nāgārjuna, and used his mode of expression closely, his teaching became too complex and abstract for the Chinese and so his school eventually declined. *101

F. 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' in Tao-sheng's Thought

Tao-sheng was considered to be another important figure in early Chinese Buddhist thought; contemporary with Seng-chao and sharing the same points of view. *102 Tao-sheng was another of the eminent monks who studied under Kumarajīva.

*103

According to 'The Biographies of Eminent Monks' and Tao-sheng's own writings *104, two of his ideas are fundamentally important to the

*101 After Chi-tsang passed away, this school declined. Although later on the Fa-hsiang school preserved Indian Buddhism, its theme was completely different from the School of Three Treatises. The Fa-hsiang School also declined quickly as soon as its founder died. cf. Chapter VII.

*102 KSC. The Biography of Tao-sheng 道生傳 TS. L. pp. 366-367.

*103 Ibid.

*104 Some of Tao-sheng's writings were lost. The existing works are: Nir-p(an chi-chu (Commentary on Mahāparinirvāna sūtra), Chu wei-mo ching 維摩經 (Commentary on the Vimalakīrti Sūtra) and Miao-fa Lien-hua ching su 妙法蓮華經 (Commentary on the Lotus Sūtra).

history of Chinese Buddhist thought. They are that 'All Incchantivas^{*105} possess "Buddha-nature"' and 'Words are forgotten whenever principles are comprehended.'^{*106}

1. 'All Icchantikas possess Buddha-nature'

Tao-sheng said: 'Whoever is born and breathes the Yin and Yang, which is the vitality of air, has the capacity to attain Nirvāṇa. Only because of their delusions, Beings continue to suffer the cycle of life and death. Since the Icchantikas are in the same class as all beings, why should they be the only ones to lack the Buddha-nature?'^{*107}

In contrast to the traditional Indian Buddhism which had been introduced into China up to that time, and which asserted that Icchantikas possess no buddha-nature, and can never become buddhas, Tao-sheng was the first to state clearly that 'Icchanti-as' do possess Buddha-nature, and the same capacity as all others to achieve Buddhahood. Soon afterwards, the 'Mahāpārnirvāṇa Sūtra' was brought to China and it was found to expound the idea of Buddha-nature for all beings, which gave a further indication that Tao-sheng's point of view was the teaching of the Buddha.

This concept is also to be found in Tao-sheng's other works as follows:

'All beings are endowed with the same understanding as the Buddha, but this understanding does not reveal itself because it is shrouded by one's delusions.'^{*108}

'All sentient beings are potential buddhas, and all of them will reach Nirvāṇa.'^{*109}

'The meaning of "There is no such thing as oneself" only means that there is no such thing as "SELF" in the cycle of life and death, but does not mean that there is no Buddha-nature of one's own.'^{*111}

*105 See Chapter I 'The Idea of Buddha-nature'. *106 Wang-yen

*107 MSCH. X. TS. VII, p. 137; cf. Fung Yu-land, A History of Chinese Philosophy, ch. 2, p. 686

*108 Fa-hua su_{法華疏} (Commentary on the Lotus Sūtra) TS. XXXVIII, p. 346.

*109 Ibid.

*110 Wei-mo chi-chieh_{維摩經解} (Commentary on Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa sūtra) TS. XXXVIII, p. 354.

Since all sentient beings innately possess such transcendent potential at all levels, logically they will all probably become Buddhas when this ability is fully developed.

Tao-sheng's idea that 'All Incchantikas possess Buddha-nature' was inspired by Confucianism which asserts 'The nature of the human beings was originally good', and 'Everyone can become a sage'^{*111} rather than by Indian Buddhism. As Tao-sheng emphasised the potential ability of becoming a buddha, it logically followed that the practice for the achievement of buddhahood became of first importance, and theory took second place.

2. 'Words should be Forgotten'

Another important point of view of Tao-sheng, which became a characteristic of later Chinese Buddhist thought, is the suggestion that 'Words should be forgotten'. Tao-sheng said:

'The purpose of using symbols and written words is to acquire a complete understanding of ideas, but once the ideas have been conceived, the symbols and written words may be forgotten. The purpose (of using) words and speech is to express the LI (the principles), but once the Li has been comprehended the words may be discarded. Ever since the transmission of the sutras eastward to China, translations have encountered repeated obstacles, which remained unsurmounted, because the translators were too literal in their translations. Let them forget the fish-trap, (but) catch the fish. Then, one may ^{*112} start to talk about (Buddhist) Tao.'

The foregoing quotation shows that Tao-sheng considered that words or sutras were merely a 'Fish-trap' which should be left behind or be forgotten once fish were caught. Only then can the words have been used correctly to reach understanding of the Tao and the immediate achievement of Buddhahood. What Tao-sheng is emphasising is 'Under-

*111 See Chapter II of this thises, Confucius and Mencius.

*112 See '102'.

standing' and 'Deprecation of written words'. The Ch'an Buddhism which developed later in the T'ang Dynasty, regarding their teaching as 'Wordless teaching', derived from the idea of Tao-sheng which has been discussed. *113

G. Conclusion

Seng-chao, Chi-tsang and Tao-sheng were the most important figures in Chinese Buddhist thought from the period of the 'Three Kingdoms' to the beginning of the T'ang Dynasty.

Seng-chao expressed himself concisely and clearly, and simplified the numerous Prajñā texts in his 'Explanation' which is only about two thousand words long. It was also Seng-chao who was the first in China to comprehend the exact meaning of the principles of the Prajñā sūtras.

Tao-sheng deprecated speech and written words, and emphasised that all sentient beings have the same potential ability to become buddhas.

Seng-chao's and Tao-sheng's thought and their modes of expression at a later time became the pattern of Chinese Buddhist thought and the way of speech of sinicised Buddhism. These characteristics had much in common with the thought of their ancestors, i.e. Confucius and Lao-tzu.

Chi-tsang's teaching was expressed in a more Indian way and was too complex and ponderous for the practical thought of the Chinese people; and so Chi-tsang's school of the Three Treatises declined, after he passed away.

*113: See Chapter VIII (of this thesis) The Ch'an School.

CHAPTER FIVE

SIMPLICITY AND SILENCE IN THE SCHOOL OF T'IENT-T'AI
A CHANGE OF DIRECTION OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT IN CHINA.A The Founder

The T'ien-t'ai School was founded by Chih-i (538-597).^{*1} It was he who established and systematised the doctrines of this School and brought them to a final completion.^{*2} Because he lived and taught on the T'ien-T'ai Mountain this School is called T'ien-t'ai.

The main principles in Chih-i's teachings are 'the Pure Nature of the Mind', 'the Harmony of the Three-fold Truth', and the idea that 'a single instant of thought is Three Thousand Worlds'.^{*3} All these principles are applied to the practice of the 'great Concentration and Insight' in one's daily life as the method of cultivating one's mind. They comprise the theory known as 'The Method of the Great Concentration and Insight', which is also the title of a book comprising Chih-i's own lectures. The three principles are discussed

*1 Chih-i (智顗), For his biography see HKSC, ch 21, Taisho issikyo, Vol. 50 pp. 264-268.

*2 Monks Hui-wen (fl 550) and Hui-ssu (515-577 A.D.) were predecessors of Chih-i; he adopted ideas and methods of meditation exercises from them. It was not until Chih-i's time that the doctrines of T'ien-t'ai were established and systematised.

*3 cf. Wing-tsit Chan, 'A Source Book of Chinese Philosophy'. ch 24, p. 396, Wing-tsit Chan asserts that all doctrines of this school are but three sayings: 'The True Nature of all things (dharma)', 'The perfect harmony of the Three Levels of Truth'; and 'The Three Thousand Worlds Immanent in an Instant of Thought'.

in Chih-i's work 'The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra'. These two works, with the 'Commentary on the Text of the Lotus Sutra' are called 'The Three Great Works of T'ien-t'ai' which constitute the whole system of thinking of this School. Since both these basic principles and the method to achieve enlightenment are founded on the Lotus Sūtra, therefore this School is also named 'Fa-hua Tsung' (the School of the Lotus). Like so many teachers before him, Chih-i wrote nothing. The Three Great Works are mainly his sayings recorded by his disciple Kuan-ting.*4

B. The Sūtra

The Lotus Sūtra was translated into Chinese in 255-6 A.D. by an unknown author. It was translated many times throughout the five hundred years after its first translation. According to reliable historical records there are at least five other translations of this same sutra. The latest version was translated in 601 A.D. by the monks Jñāgupta and Dharmagupta. But the most popular translation in Chinese throughout East Asia is the version which was translated by Kumārajīva in 406 A.D. The Lotus Sūtra translated by Kumārajīva consists of twenty-eight chapters.*5

The gist of the teaching of the sutra is to be found in Chapter II

*4 Biography of Kuan-ting (灌頂) (561-632) HKSC; Taishō issikyō; and the prefaces of Chih-i's works.

*5 Miao-fa lien-hua ching (Saddharmapundarika sūtra 妙法蓮華經).

'The Means', Chapter XVI 'The Immortality of the Buddha', and Chapter XXV 'Kuan-yin's Gateway is open to everyone'. The other chapters are more in the nature of literary expansions.

The point of the first of these three (Chapter II) is that 'Everyone will become a Buddha eventually'. In addition Chapter III, 'The Parable of the Burning House', Chapter IV 'The Wandering Son and the Seeking Father', and Chapter XIII 'The Prediction of the women and the others' re-emphasise that 'everyone will become a Buddha eventually'.

The main point of the second of the three (Chapter XVI) is that everyone who becomes a Buddha is immortal; his divine power and wisdom are immeasurable. In the following chapter (XVII) until the last chapter 'The Encouragements of Bodhisattva Pu-hsien' are those stories of the Bodhisattvas, which re-emphasise this same point of the immortality, the divine power, and the immeasurable wisdom of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva. The final one of the three (Chapter XXV) is called 'Kuan-yin's Gateway is open to everyone'. The great mercy and compassion of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, emphasised through Bodhisattva Kuan-yin's activities. His gateway is open to everyone, to all classes and forms of sentient beings in any circumstance, wherever and whenever they need help.

In short, the whole body of the Lotus Sūtra is large, rich in religious and literary imagination, and its main emphasis is on three points:-

- (1) The ability of every sentient being to become a Buddha;
- (2) The immortality, divine power and transcendental wisdom of the Buddha (which everyone can achieve).
- (3) The great mercy and compassion, the great wisdom and the great divine power of the Bodhisattva. This also implies that this mercy, compassion, wisdom and divine power are possessed by everyone since everyone has the potential ability to become a Buddha.

Taking the Lotus Sūtra as his basic teaching, Chih-i founded the T'ien-tai School in the fifth century. As we can see, the Lotus Sūtra is a book very rich

in religious and literary imagination.*⁶ What Chih-i developed from this Sūtra is a very profound and abstract theory of the nature of the mind; and the technique of the discipline of the mind.*⁷ The former is mainly described in his work 'The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra' whilst the latter is detailed in 'The Great Concentration and Insight'.

How did Chih-i abstract the metaphysical theory of the nature of the mind from the Lotus Sūtra, a book which contains so many stories rich in literary imagination? How did he develop the technique of the discipline of the mind? Before answering these questions, we should look at the main ideas of Chih-i's 'Mind-theory' in 'The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra' and secondly we should see what he had to say in 'The Great Concentration and Insight'.

CC.1. The Idea of the 'Pure Nature of the Mind'

Kumārājīva's Three Treatises School suggests that nothing has any nature of its own but depends on conditions and causations, and so all things are naturally 'Empty'. This idea is known as the 'Principle of Emptiness'; and is one of the fundamental doctrines in the T'ien-t'ai School, but Chih-i has altered its emphasis from looking outwards to looking inwards. In contrast to Kumārājīva's 'Conditions and Causations' kind of Emptiness, Chih-i considers that all things are merely aspects of the mind and have no nature of their own, hence they are EMPTY. The 'Emptiness' of Chih-i depends less on the external conditions and causations, but pays more attention to the internal subjective mind. As he himself says:-

"Since all things depend on the mind for their being and have no independent existence, all things are unreal and imaginary.

When the mind is compared to them, their existence is the same

*⁶ The teaching of this Sūtra is preached in a dramatic literary way. Each chapter consists of one or two mythical stories, describing the supernatural power of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. cf. W.W. Soothill's English translation of 'Lotus of the Wonderful Law', ch. 1, in which he describes this sūtra as 'A great religious drama of the highest order, with the whole universe as its stage, Buddhas, men, devils, gods, god-kings, and various kinds of sentient beings form its dramatis personae'.

*⁷ See section two II

This idea is again shown in the definition of 'Concentration':

"By Concentration is meant knowing that all things from the very beginning have no nature of their own. They neither come into existence nor go out of existence. Because they are caused by illusions and imagination, they exist without existence. But the existence of existing things is the same as non-existence. They are merely the mind, whose substance admits no differentiation. Those who hold this view can stop erroneous thought. This is called CONCENTRATION."*9

Instead of considering that all things which come into existence depend on external conditions and causations, Chih-i asserts that all existing things are caused by illusions and imagination. Although things are still regarded as merely phenomena and empty without a nature of their own, the Emptiness of T'ien-t'ai is subjective while the system of thinking of Kumārājīva's Emptiness is objective. Although the conclusions reached by these two Schools are the same, the two ways of thinking are opposite in direction. The objective external conditions and causations were not the subject of discussion in the T'ien-t'ai School - the thinking itself was about the nature of mind. The difference between ('Causation-conditioned Emptiness' and 'Emptiness of Mind' is where the distinction between the Indian and Chinese minds lies. In contrast to the emphasis on 'the emptiness of unreal things which have no nature of their own, T'ien-t'ai emphasises that the mind is real and the true substance of all things. Such a real mind the T'ien-t'ai School regards as 'The Mind is Pure by Nature':

"Why is it called the mind is Pure by nature? Although the mind has been obscured from time immemorial by the

*8 The Method of Mahāyāna Concentration and meditation. CHTTC Part II, p. 30816

Fung's 'History of Chinese Philosophy', p. 264, Translated into English by D. Bodde (Original translations have been used, with changes of words, for clarity)

*9 Ibid, p. 30816

the contaminating things based on ignorance, yet its nature of purity has never changed. Hence it is called 'Pure'. Why? Because contaminating things based originally on ignorance are separate from the mind. Why do we say that they are separate? Because things with ignorance as their substance are non-existent things. Their existence is the same as non-existence. Since they are non-existent, they cannot be associated with the mind. Therefore we say they are separate. Since nothing that is contaminated and based on ignorance can be associated with it, it is therefore called 'PURE in nature'. Being central and real, it has been awake from the beginning; it is therefore called the Mind. For these reasons it is called 'The Mind is Pure by Nature'.^{*10}

After regarding the mind as 'real' and 'Pure' the founder of the T'ien-tai School considered the universe in its entirety merely an aspect of this 'real' and 'Pure' mind and named it 'Genuine Thusness' (Chen-ju[†]真如):-

"Furthermore, although things are really non-existent, because they are caused by illusion and imagination, they have the characteristic of coming into and going out of existence. When unreal things come into existence, and when the things go out of existence, the mind does not go out of existence. Not coming into existence, it is therefore not increased, and not going out of existence, it is therefore not decreased. Because it neither comes into nor goes out of existence, it is called Genuine. All Buddhas of past, present and future time, and all sentient beings have the same one pure mind as the essence of their being. All ordinary and saintly

*10 Ibid, p.30817

beings, and all things each have their own differences and their own differentiated characters. But this true mind has neither differentiation nor character. It is therefore called THUSNESS. All things are merely this one MIND. Therefore this one mind is called GENUINE THUSNESS.

If there are things outside this mind they are neither GENUINE nor THUSNESS, but false differentiations. This is why the 'Awakening of Faith' says 'From the very beginning all things are free from all characters of word and speech, from terms and concepts, and from the character of mental causations (groping for objects). At the bottom they are the same without differentiation, do not change, and cannot be destroyed. They are only aspects of one Mind.' Therefore this is called GENUINE THUSNESS. Because of this meaning 'The Mind is Pure by Nature' is also called GENUINE THUSNESS."^{*11}

C.2. The Method of 'Mind-discipline'

From what has been said above, the thinking of the T'ien-tai School emphasises two main points: firstly, all beings and all things have the same mind as their essence, and secondly, all things are created by the mind, by imagination and illusion. Since all beings possess the same pure nature of mind, the logical conclusion is that all beings have the same ability to become Buddhas or Sages. Also because things are brought into existence by the mind and the mind is their substance, but not the things themselves, then things are merely phenomena, and so they are empty. Although the 'Emptiness of Things' in T'ien-tai's thinking derives from the Three Treatises School of Kumarājīva and Nāgārjuna's Principles of Emptiness' the thinking of the 'Pure Mind of the Nature of the Self' (or the Mind is Pure by Nature' can be traced back to Mencius' theory of 'the nature of the

*11 Ibid, p.30817 also in Taishō issikyō Vol Iv, p. 642.

mind' and the Confucian idea that everyone is able to become a sage. The core of 'Emptiness' has thus been moved into the 'MIND' itself from the external 'CAUSATION-CONDITION'. What the 'Pure mind of the nature of the self' of Chih-i is most concerned with is not the objectivity of the nature of things but the nature of the mind which is subjectivity. The principle of 'Emptiness' in T'ien-tai's teaching is founded on the nature of the mind, while Nagarjuna's and Kumarajiva's principle is based on 'the Nature of Things'. The difference between 'The nature of the Mind' and 'the Nature of Things' provides different angles of thought, one Indian and one Chinese.

C.3. The Practice of Great Concentration and Insight*12

Like his ancestors Confucius who said in the 'Great Learning' that his aim was to make the gate by which those who learn can achieve virtue, and suggested that people pursue their learning solely to cultivate themselves and to be perfectly sincere in their thought, Chih-i took the cultivation of one's mind as the aim of his teaching by concentrating all external things into the pure nature of the mind ('The Mind is pure by Nature'), considering them as various aspects of the mind; his 'Great Concentration and Insight' is merely the method of guiding people to Nirvāṇa by means of their self-cultivation. Accordingly, 'The Great Concentration and Insight' is one of the two most important writings in Chih-i's teaching. As the modern scholar of philosophy Fung Yu-lan says:

"... most of Chih's works, however, are primarily concerned with the technique of self-cultivation."*13

From the viewpoint of the PURE NATURE OF THE MIND, Chih-i considers that one becomes a Buddha by awaking, and that all beings in the universe are existences that depend on their own illusion and imagination. Whenever imagination and illusion (Ignorance) is got rid of, there is the achievement of awaking. He

*12 Mo-ho chih-kuan: 摩訶止觀 CHTTC Part II, pp 2868-3113.

*13 Fung's 'A History of Chinese Philosophy', p. 751.

also considers that the achievement of awaking and the destruction of illusions can only be attained by spiritual cultivation. This cultivation consists of two parts - Chih and Kuan (Concentration and Insight).^{*14}

What is Concentration and Insight? Chih-i himself defines Concentration as follows:

"By Concentration is meant to understand that all things from the very beginning have no nature of their own. They neither come into existence nor go out of existence. Because they are caused by illusion and imagination, they exist without real existence. But the existence of existing things is the same as non-existence. They are only in the mind, whose substance admits no differentiation. Those who hold this view can stop the flow of erroneous thought. This is called Concentration."^{*15}

Chih-i's definition of Insight is as follows:

"By Insight is meant that although things do not come into existence and go out of existence, nevertheless they were caused to arise out of the nature of the mind and hence they are like illusions and dreams, which exist but really do not exist. This is therefore called 'Insight'. ... it means to base one's thought on and concentrate on the mind only, in order to practise concentration and insight."^{*16}

Through the practice of Concentration and Insight one can identify oneself with the pure nature of one's own mind to become a Buddha. This can be seen in

*14 Chih-kuan 止觀.

*15 See '8', also in Taisho issikyo, Vol. 46, p. 462

*16 Ibid, p. 462

"As to the function of concentration and insight, it means that because of the accomplishment of concentration the pure mind is real in substance and the nature which is without duality is harmonised in li (the principle of the rational nature of things). Thus sentient beings are all harmoniously combined to form a body of one single character. Therefore, this pure nature of the mind is not differentiated and is the true essence of things ... Again owing to the accomplishment of concentration, one's mind is the same and not differentiated and one no longer remains within the cycle of Life and Death. Yet owing to the accomplishment of concentration one remains in the great Nirvana, and owing to the attainment of insight one dwells in the realm of Life ... further, owing to the accomplishment of concentration, one knows that the cycle of life and death is the same as Nirvana, and owing to the accomplishment of insight, one knows that transmigration is the cycle of life and death and the absence of transmigration is Nirvāṇa."*17

'Concentration and Insight' are considered to be the two main parts of the cultivation and discipline of the mind in the T'ien-tai School, and are looked upon as the two wings of a bird, functioning simultaneously. They are both of equal importance in Mind-cultivation; they not only go together but reinforce each other. Concentration assists Insight, Insight assists Concentration. By means of this practice one's enlightenment is attained. The methods of Concentration and Insight and their function in mind-cultivation are discussed in very great detail in 'The Great Concentration and Insight' and other works of Chih-i.

*17 Ibid, p. 661

Since in the T'ien-tai School the main meaning of 'Concentration and Insight' and its practice can be seen mainly in the Great Concentration and Insight, but the viewpoint of 'Concentration on mind-nature' is brought to bear on every explanation and commentary, in every section of Chih-i's works. Chih-i himself regards it as 'The Explanation of Meditating upon Everything from the Viewing Angle of Mind' (Kuan Hsin Shih 觀心釋). We can accordingly say that all T'ien-tai's works aim at two subjects: one is the nature of the mind, the other is the practice of concentration and meditation on mind.

The book of 'The Great Concentration and Insight' deals especially with the method and practice of Concentration and meditation. It consists of twenty large volumes. These are classified into the Ten Comprehensive Parts:

- (i) The outline of the Great Concentration and Insight.
- (ii) The explanation of the Great Concentration and Insight.
- (iii) The substance and characters of the Great Concentration and Insight.
- (iv) Concentration and Insight is the core of all things.
- (v) Perfect and imperfect 'Concentration and Insight'.
- (vi) The means for the practice of Concentration and Insight.
- (vii) The practice of The Great Concentration and Insight.
- (viii) The result and effect of the Great Concentration and Insight.
- (ix) The doctrine which led to The Great Concentration and Insight.
- (x) Summary. (The ultimate state of Concentration and Insight)*18

Each part of these Ten has many branches. Each of the branches is subdivided into sub-branches, and each of the sub-branches has sub-sub-branches. For instance, the first part of the Ten - 'The outline of the Great Concentration

*18 Mo-ho chih-kuan, vol. I. CHTC Part II, p. 2950.

- (i) Making a great decision of one's own.
- (ii) Carrying out the great practice.
- (iii) Accomplishing the great achievement.
- (iv) Breaking the great nets.
- (v) Going back to the 'Great Place' *19

Chih-i himself explains the titles of these Five parts as follows:

"What is the meaning of 'To make a great decision'? It means that sentient beings are ignorant and do not know their own minds. Bodhisattvas should devote themselves assiduously to enlighten both themselves and others to accomplish the achievement of Buddhahood.

What does 'To carry out the Great Practice' mean? It means that although one has made one's great decision to strive for enlightenment, enlightenment can never be attained unless a person practises very hard and constantly, since it is a long way to the state of enlightenment from the everyday world.

What does 'To accomplish the Great Achievement' that is Buddhahood' mean? Through constant practice enlightenment is automatically gained ...

What does 'To break the Great Nets' mean? Because various sutras guide people to enlightenment, but are too numerous, and the theories in them expound so many points of view on so many subjects that people usually understand some of these points but misunderstand most of the others. When they find that they agree with one opinion, they find themselves in opposition to other opinions, and so become confused. Now this book 'Concentration and Insight' synthesises all the theories in the sutras, producing the harmonious unity and

*19 Ibid, pp. 2868-3113.

clarifying all the confusion of ideas, like setting birds free by breaking the net that holds them.

Finally, what does 'To go back to the Great Place' mean?

It means that the 'Great Place' of all beings has always been boundless, with neither beginning nor end; it is neither blocked up nor is it opened up; and there is no darkness or illusion; if one reaches this Great Place one will always be comfortable and free from any attachment."^{*20}

In a similar way each of these five consists of many branches; each branch is divided into various chapters. In each of the chapters there are many sections, and there are many subjects expounded or discussed in them.

The main content of the 'Ten Comprehensive Parts' is concentrated in the first seven parts, which consist of twelve volumes of lectures made by Chih-i before he died; the other three parts of the Ten are not complete.^{*21}

By judging the whole body of this incomplete book and the rest of Chih-i's work, the teachings of the T'ien-tai School can be seen to be gigantic and complex. But if we judge from the points made in the book of the 'Great Concentration and Insight', Chih-i's speeches are seen to be very simple, and do not go beyond advocating 'Mind-cultivation'. The core of his thinking concentrates only on the cultivation of one's own mind, and what Chih-i stresses is the 'Practice' of mind-cultivation, not 'speech'. All the complex speeches of Chih-i are to be seen as merely the guidelines to the practice of the cultivation of the mind. Whenever one practises, one's self-cultivation, concentration and meditation are progressing; 'Speech' or 'words' are eventually discarded.^{*22} All the complex words of Chih-i must be reduced to silence, and he returns to the way of his ancestors who preferred to say nothing and identify themselves with virtue.

^{*20} Ibid, pp. 2868-3113

^{*21} T'ang chün-i 'The Development of ideas of Tao in Chinese Philosophy' Book III, p. 1151, also in CHTTC Part II 2950-3113

^{*22} See Chapter II.

If the sutras had been properly digested and synthesized by earlier scholars, Chih-i's speeches would not have been made so tedious and complex.

It is on the central point of the 'Nature of the Mind' and its 'Cultivation' that the Ch'an School with its emphasis on its teachings being 'beyond words' and 'pointing directly into one's mind to enable one to become a Buddha' is founded.*23

In spite of his tedious speeches, Chih-i shows directly his admiration of and preference for 'wordlessness' in all his doctrines. He says:

"The sūtra says 'The monks should do two things frequently; one is to preach the doctrine of the sages, the other is to keep the silence of the sages.' The meaning of 'The preaching of the doctrine of the sages' has been mentioned in the last chapter; what is the meaning of keeping the silence of the sages? It means that the 'four Truths' which all sages have realised and experienced cannot be told; they are beyond words and cannot be explained. To tell people who have not yet realised or experienced these Four Truths would be like burning a candle for the blind. Is it worth burning a candle for them since they cannot see. Since truth is beyond words or explanation, that is why one should keep the silence of the sages. In the Hua-yen sūtra, it says 'The countless worlds are all beyond words and description'; this means that the ultimate truth cannot be told. Furthermore, when, for example, the monk Ch'en-ju (陳如) attained the sagehood of Arhat he saw instantly that truth has neither words nor sound and said 'As far as I have realised it, the way to Nirvāṇa is wordless and speechless.' This wordlessness of truth (this truth which is wordless) is therefore called 'the silence of the sages'. Again Bodhisattva Vimalakīrti himself kept silent

*23 See the preface and Chapter VI.

in his lecture period, and all the other bodhisattvas who were attending it asked questions which were thus answered by silence. Since Vimalakīrti's teaching was beyond words and thought, and the doctrine of the Four Truths cannot be told, these are called 'the silence of the sages'. Also in the sutras of Mahā-prajñā Pāramitā it is said that 'the meaning of the sentence can be attained neither by the body (physically) nor by one's mouth (through one's speech) nor by knowledge (wisdom), because all the meanings of truth are beyond words. This principle of wordlessness is called 'the silence of the sages'. That is why the Lotus Sūtra says 'Cease! Cease! There is no need to speak! My teaching is subtle and hard to comprehend.' The Lotus Sūtra also says 'This teaching of mine (the Buddha) cannot be demonstrated; words are merely a means. My teaching is not a thing which is discursive or discriminatory, so it is beyond reasoning and comprehension.' Such teaching which cannot be put into words transcends all speech and is called 'The teaching of the silence of the sages ...'*24

According to Chih-i's sayings as above, both the 'preaching of the sages' teaching' and 'the silence of the sages' doctrine' are to be considered to be two forms of expression. Since ultimate truth is considered to be beyond words, 'the silence of the sages' is regarded as the one form for expressing and responding to the truth itself. Chih-i's attitude towards silence in thinking is shown here. Another clearer view of this point of Chih-i's can be seen in the following speech:

"A question arises here; the preachings of the sages were made for guiding the lives of others, for cultivating oneself to the ideal happy state. That is why one keeps oneself in

*24 See '19'.

silence (the silence of the sages). Hence, 'keeping oneself in the silence of the sages' is merely for one's enlightenment and has nothing to do with others, has it? Exactly, one keeps oneself in the silence of the sages mainly for one's own practice of the cultivation of the mind. However, this may also be accompanied by doing good for the enlightenment of others. The reasons for this are many. For instance, there are some people who do not like to talk or to read very much, and that is why sages sometimes keep themselves in their teaching of other people. Again, in 'The Buddhist Rules of Monks and Nuns' it says that 'Bodhisattvas, in order to bless others, usually accept others' offerings silently. Although saying nothing they accept others' offerings, and bless and teach others.' This is called 'Keeping the silence of the sages'.

Furthermore, saying nothing, *Ven, Hsieh (月)* discarded all illusions and ignorance of Bodhisattva Ma-ming. Moreover merely because of seeing the attitude of the Buddha who was deeply in silent concentration and meditation, an unaccountable number of sentient beings had seen a trace of the ultimate truth and attempted enlightenment. This is called 'Keeping oneself in the silence of the sages'. Its benefits to people are great, so how can we say that 'the silence of the sages' is of no benefit to others?"*25

Chih-i's 'The Silence of the Sages' shows that Chih-i himself was the first Chinese Buddhist scholar who considered 'SILENCE' to be one of the forms of speech and the best form of 'speech' for preaching the subtle truth effectively; the

*25 The profound meaning of the Lotus Sūtra. CHTC Part II, p. 1736.

'silence of the sages' also shows that the way in which Buddhist thinking expresses itself in Chinese is a direct response and return to Confucian thinking; for example, in The Analects it says, 'If you, Master, do not say anything, how can we pass on your teaching? ... Does Heaven say anything? The four seasons come one after the other and all things flourish.'

In 'The Great Concentration and Insight' in the chapter 'Concentrating and Meditating on the Mind one enters into the state of enlightenment which is beyond thought and words', Chih-i says the following:—

"By concentrating and meditating on the mind, one enters the state of enlightenment which is beyond thought and words; such a state is subtle and difficult to explain. Now, let us first explain the state which is conceivable and discussable, then it will be easier to make the meaning of the state which is beyond words and thought reveal itself indirectly and negatively."*26

At least two points of Chih-i's thinking emerge. Firstly, the ultimate Truth is wordless, and so words are merely a means of indicating the ultimate truth. Whenever the state of ultimate truth is revealed, all words have to be forgotten. The element of silence as a way of expression is emphasised here. Secondly, as well as the emphasis on 'Silence', 'Practice' is also emphasised in this passage. Although these explanations are only considered as indications to the 'State' which is beyond thought and words, the revelation of this state is merely the second most important business in the eyes of Chih-i; the most important business is how to enter into and live in that state, through concentrating and meditating on the subject of 'mind'.

In the section called 'Concentrating on Aggregations, Sensations and Realms' of the Great Concentration and Insight, it is stated:

*26 Mo-ho chih-kuang. Vol.I. CHITC Part II, p. 2954.

"Both the external and internal Aggregations, Sensations and Realms all arise from the mind. Like a doctor who must know the cause of the illness before he can cure his patient, we must see through to the roots of these aggregations, sensations and realms which are all illusions of the mind, before we can uproot them and attempt to achieve enlightenment. Again, it is like reducing a length of ten-feet into one foot, and then reducing one foot into one inch. Let us now put aside the other four Aggregations (and six sensations and eighteen realms) and concentrate mainly on the last Aggregation 'The Consciousness' and meditate on it. Because the Aggregation of Consciousness is simply the mind."^{*27}

The problem with which Chih-i is most concerned is the 'Mind' and its cultivation, and not external things, reasoning and arguing. Because it is based on a type of thinking which is most concerned with the human mind, The Five Brief Parts of the 'Great Concentration and Insight' are entitled 'To Make a Great Decision', 'to Practise the Great Cultivation', 'To Attain the Great Result of Enlightenment', 'To Break the net of people's illusions', and 'To Return to the Great Home'. These titles all concentrate on the subject of the Mind and its cultivation. Preference for and the attitude towards 'Practice' and 'Silence' in the thinking of Chih-i can be seen everywhere in his Three Works. Moreover, consideration of the fundamental meaning of ultimate principles, transcendent words and speech, and the myriad of things are of the mind and do not have any nature of their own. The cultivation of one's own mind is the most important thing for one's Enlightenment, and Chih-i cares only for practice and not for words or speech, even when he himself was lecturing on his Three Works. Like a raft only used for crossing a river, which has to be left behind when the other shore is reached, all the words in the Three Works (of Chih-i) have to be

*27 Ibid, pp. 2950-57.

discarded while one's meditation takes over or when one has been enlightened. Three Works are merely a guidance for cultivation and Enlightenment. Practice and silence as a way of expression in the thinking of T'ien-tai School' is based on this.

E. The Attitude towards both Words and Wordlessness

Chih-i comments on the title of Chapter II 'Means' of The Lotus Sūtra:

"As the Sūtra says: 'Only I (the Buddha himself) know these meanings of the profound truth as do the Buddhas of all ages in all worlds.'

Again, this Sūtra says: 'Cease! Cease! there is no need to speak. My teaching is subtle and hard to comprehend.'

Taking words as a means the Buddha preaches his teachings.

Hence this chapter is named 'Means'."*28

In another way the 'Teaching of the silence of the Sages' is regarded as one of the forms of 'Speech'; and in this instance 'Speech' is to be considered as the 'Means' for silence. If there is no intention of guiding others to Nirvana, words as a means are unnecessary. This sense reminds us of Chih-i's ancestor's sayings:

"I would rather say nothing. Does Heaven say anything."

The only difference is that Chih-i tried to identify himself with his own mind through self-cultivation, while his ancestors tried to identify themselves with the virtue of Heaven through their mind-cultivation.

Furthermore, in the same way as Confucius, who saw that there was truth and many more principles behind the silence of the Universe, Chih-i said that he saw that all the profound doctrines had been preached by the Buddha's silence. For instance, the first chapter of The Lotus Sūtra says:

"...At that time the Buddha was surrounded, worshipped, revered, honoured and extolled by the four groups of disciples ... The Buddha sat cross-legged and had entered into the SAMĀDHI of the 'Meaning of Infinity';

state of concentration and insight. At this time the heavens rained flowers down on the Buddha, and the whole universe trembled in six ways; while the vast assembly looked on the Buddha in amazement, he emitted a glow from between his eyebrows which illuminated a thousand worlds to the east, omitting none of them, reaching downwards to the lowest hell and upwards to the highest heaven of each world. Here in this world were then made visible in those vast domains six states of existence, likewise was seen the Buddha at present existing in those lands"*29

In spite of the fact that the above account gives only a description of the lecturer, of the 'Lotus Meeting', the audience, the place and the atmosphere of this lecture, no abstract principle is stated, no speech or doctrine is made, yet Chih-i commented on this description in detail and considered that the profound meaning of the sutra had been made completely clear through the attitude of the Buddha's meditation, the trembling of the earth and the flowers showering down from the heavens. As 'A Comment on the Six Kinds of Trembling of the Earth' says:

"The six kinds of trembling of the earth are a mysterious prediction of something good; they are good omens. Because they are so different from common things they are called 'Characteristics'. Such six Characteristics of Good Omens symbolise the perfect one who broke the seal of his own 'Ignorance' six times ... Whenever one's Ignorance is made to disappear, enlightenment is achieved: this is why all Buddha's worlds tremble in the six different ways. Again, the six symbolise the six levels of the progress of the Bodhisattvas' practices. ... That is why the Sūtra of

*29 Ibid. pp. 2646-2651.

Pure Practice says, 'Whenever a Bodhisattva is born, there is always a trembling of the earth, because at the end of his present lifetime his Ignorance will have been completely discarded.' The Ignorance of beings is to be ended and their enlightenment achieved; therefore the earth trembles."*30

A Comment on the attitude of the Buddha's Silent meditation:-

"This sutra says 'When the Buddha had preached the Sutra he sat cross-legged, then entered into 'the Samadhi (state of concentration) of The Meaning of Infinity', where his body and mind were motionless.' This means that Concentration and Insight both had to be complete. It was in order to preach correctly that the Buddha entered into Samadhi before preaching his Lotus Sutra. If one lacks 'Insight' one has no Concentration. In order to point this out the Buddha sometimes preached his doctrines, then entered into Samadhi. In fact, Concentration and Insight not only go together but assist each other. Wherever there is Concentration there is Insight; wherever there is Insight there is also Concentration. Both when 'entering into' (Samādhi) and 'coming out of' (Samādhi) to preach doctrine Concentration and Insight are in perfect harmony."*31

According to the above quotation, one who is silent is no different from one who speaks. Speech is only one of the things in the universe which spring from truth which was always itself silent.

Moreover, Chih-i in his 'Commentary on the Virmalakīrti Sūtra' says:-

"All the activities of the Buddha, even a wink, a cough, coming in, going out, sitting down or standing up ... all

*30 Ibid. pp. 2646-2651.

*31 Ibid. pp. 2646-57.

From this point of view, even when the Buddha did not say anything he was still considered to have been lecturing: this means that speechlessness is no different from speech in the eyes of Chih-i. However, Chih-i considered that the speeches themselves were not speeches at all, and that Buddha never said a single word throughout his whole teaching life. This idea of Chih-i's is repeated often in his words, as follows:-

"The Buddha says that 'Nothing has ever been preached - this is the preaching of the Buddha'."*33

"If anyone realises that the Buddha never said a single word in his teaching during his whole life, that person really has heard a great deal."*34

According to Chih-i: "The Virmalakīrti Sūtra says:

'When a lecturer is in a meeting and is instructing or speaking on some kind of principle, no instruction or speech is really ever given; likewise, his audience never receives or hears anything from lecturers.'*35

"What the Buddha has preached is like a grain of soil which is found in one's nail, whilst what the Buddha has not preached is like all the soil in the universe; ... that is why The Virmalakīrti Sūtra says 'All things derive from the mind, because the mind is the essence of things, which is beyond words.'*36

*32 The Profound Meaning of Wei-mōching, Ch. 9, CHTC Part II

*33 The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra, Vol. I. CHTC Part II pp.2646-51

*34 Mo-ho chih-kuang, Vol. 1. CHTC Part II, pp. 2863-68.

*35 Ibid, p. 2863.

*36 Ibid. p. 2865.

"Speechlessness is one kind of speech; using this as a method, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas mercifully expound their teaching and guide others to the truth. Speechlessness is no more than speech since it is something which shows the truth which is itself speechless."*37

"All sutras are means established for helping human beings to become enlightened, like prescriptions for curing illnesses."*38

"The substance of things transcends Birth and Death, which have always been beyond words, therefore it cannot be put into words, but certain conditions exist for the guidance of others in making points of principle when speech is still needed. That is why Buddha has been leading and enabling sentient beings to abandon their encumbrances, by parables and by countless devices all broadly setting forth the spoken doctrine."*39

With the aim of preaching the profound truth which has always been beyond words or speech, Chih-i considered that even if the lecturer kept silent, his silence was still one of the ways of expression. Even if he was silent the lecturer was preaching and transmitting the principle he wanted to, and so, although the lecturer did not say a single word, in his silence he did say something substantial.

Aiming at the enlightenment of the nature of one's own mind, Chih-i considered that even if a lecturer spoke for a whole day, no-one might realise or attain enlightenment. All the speeches of this lecturer would be no different from silence or speechlessness.

*37 Ibid. p 2860

*38 See '33'.

*39 Ibid. p. 2646.

Chih-i considered that because most sentient beings do not understand the profound meaning of those things which transcend speech, the Buddha was compelled to make speeches as a means of describing the principles which are beyond words. Accordingly all the speeches of speechlessness are no more than speechlessness itself. Hence, the difference between speech and speechlessness is discarded and the two are identified as one. Chih-i's attitude towards both Words and Wordlessness is derived from such an idea. Such an attitude towards both words and wordlessness is also one of the traditional ways in which Chinese people express themselves. This derives from Confucianist ideas of 'both attending to and withdrawing from office of State' and was used by Confucius himself. (See Chapter II.) On the one hand, Chih-i admired and preferred wordlessness, but on the other hand he expressed an attitude towards both speech and silence, since as far as the cultivation of one's mind is concerned, no words are needed but rather practice.

Chih-i's Three Works are based on this theme. His thinking sprang partly from the heretic thinking of the spirit of the salvation of the bodhisattvas, and partly from Confucianist practical thought. If the thought of the numerous Buddhist sūtras had been taken into Chinese culture and methods of concentration and insight worked out, Chih-i would probably not have needed to spend time lecturing on his 'Three Works'. Just before he passed away, he said that if he had not spent so much of his life speaking and teaching, he himself would have become a bodhisattva on the higher level of 'Ground' (Ti) instead of on the level of 'Confidence' (Hsin) which is much further away from the Buddhahood than the level of 'Ground'.^{*40} He was thus forty-two stages lower than he should have been. It is considered that any stage may take one many lifetimes to attain. This shows us Chih-i's attitude to simplicity, silence and moral practice.

*40 See '1'.

From this we can see that if Seng-chao is regarded as the first one to comprehend the Prajñā principle and to explain the whole theory of the 360 volumes of the Prajñā Sūtras in only two thousand words, and introduce silence and simplicity for the first time into Chinese Buddhist thought, then Chih-i was probably the first Chinese scholar to understand and establish a way which was especially suited to the Chinese people, to enable them to achieve enlightenment. He was also the first to simplify the Indian Buddhist theory, allowing for external subjects and objects to be brought into the 'Mind'. Hence Chinese Buddhism takes 'The Nature of the Mind' as its centre while Indian Buddhism chooses 'The Nature of Things'. Sinicised Buddhism arose and developed to produce the Ch'an School, many of whose founding principles derived from Chih-i's ideas.

CHAPTER SIX

'SIMPLICITY' AND 'SILENCE' IN THE SCHOOL OF HUA-YEN

1. THE FOUNDER

The Hua Yen School is one of the three main schools of Chinese Buddhism; and since the teaching is based mainly on the 'Hua Yen Sūtra'*¹ it is thus called 'The Hua Yen School'. The Chinese word 'Hua Yen' means 'the flower decoration' or 'flowery splendour'. In India this sutra has never inspired a school, nor has anyone commented on it, whereas in China it became one of the best known and independent Buddhist schools. The sūtra was first translated in 420 A.D.; but it attracted little attention. One hundred years later, the Monk Tu-shun (557-640)*² lectured and wrote a manual in order to teach people how to meditate on the thinking of Hua Yen*³. This manual is called 'On Meditation on the Realms of the Totality of Buddhahood' (of Hua Yen)*⁴. Thus Tu-shun became the nominal founder of the school. The real founder, however, was the Monk, Fa-tsang (643-712) who systematised and developed the ideas of the sutra*⁵. The Monk Fa-tsang was

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- *1 華嚴宗. Hua-yen ching 華嚴經 (Ayatamsaka sūtra). Three Chinese translations, the 60 chapters version of 420 A.D. by Buddhāra, IX, pp. 395-788; the 80 chapters version of 699 A.D. by Śikṣhānada, TS X, pp. 1-444; and the 40 chapters version of 789 A.D. by Prajñā, TS X, pp. 661-851.
 - *2 Biography of Tu-shun 杜順傳 Fo Tsu T'ung chi 佛祖統誌 TS 2035, pp. 292-93; and Nan T'ing's 'History of Hua-yen Tsung' (Taipei 1956) pp. 347-84.
 - *3 TS LI, pp. 158-164; Hou Wai-lu et al. 'A General History of Chinese Thought' IV, part I, pp. 233-4.
 - *4 Hua-yen Fa-chieh-kuan 華嚴法界觀 TS 1883, pp. 684-92.
 - *5 The Biography of Master Fa-tsang 法藏傳. TS LI pp. 280-283, 732-733

a contemporary Buddhist scholar with the Monks Hui-neng (638-713)*⁶, Hsüang-tsang (600-664)*⁷ and Hsüan-tsang's chief disciple K'uei-chi (632-682)*⁸.

It was said that while the School of Fa-hsiang (法相宗, Hsüan-tsang's School) was flourishing, the Monk Fa-tsang assisted Hsüan-tsang in his translations, but later Fa-tsang left because he did not agree with Hsüang-tsang's point of view.*⁹ There is also a record of the Hua Yen School which says:

'During and since the Wei and Chin Dynasties people still paid great attention to principles and meditation. They commented on the meaning of the sutras and transmitted and taught their essence. But from the Chan Kuan period of the T'ang Dynasty the study of terminology became hair-splitting, and casuistry supplanted authenticity, to the extent that true mystery was subordinated to heterodoxy. Although it had the colour of milk, it did not have its taste. The more they tried to dispel illusion, the greater the confusion became.*¹⁰

From the above quotation we can see that Fa-tsang himself and his followers paid less attention to the study of the commentaries, but concentrated on the sutras themselves.

2. THE BASIC THINKING OF THE HUA YEN SŪTRA: THE IDEA OF 'THE INDESCRIBABLE-INDESCRIBABLE' AND FA-TSANG'S INTERPRETATION OF IT

A. 'The Indescribable-Indescribable'

The Sūtra says:-

'The Buddha addressed Bodhisattva Cātavarāja saying "Oh, my dear disciple, in order to make the sentient beings in the world apprehend the numbers and quantities of Buddha's experience, you have asked me a question about the inconceivable, unimaginable, and unutterable infinity of Buddhahood. Listen carefully and I shall now explain to you:
Ten million is a koṭi;
One koṭi is an ayuta;

*6 惠能. See Chapter VIII

*7 玄奘. See Chapter VII

*8 窺基. Ibid.

*9 See '5'

*10 Tsang mi 宗密, Yuan-chiao su 玄覺疏. CHTCC part II, LXXI-LXXII, p. 29257

One ayuta is a niyuta;
One niyuta is a binabara;
One binabara is ... (thus it goes on.
in geometrical progression one hundred and twenty-four
times more, and the number is then called One INDESCRIBABLE^{#11}
indescribable Turning ... "

Then the Buddha continued with the following stanzas:

'The Indescribable-indescribable Turning permeates what
cannot be described ...
It would take eternity to count
All the Buddha's universes.
In each dust-note of these states
Are countless worlds of Buddhas ...
From the tip of each hair of Buddha
Are revealed the indescribable Pure Lands ...
Their unobstructed Minds are indescribable;
Their supernatural powers are indescribable,
The manners with which they observe, purify and educate
Sentient beings are indescribable ...
The teachings they preach are indescribable.
In each of these teachings are contained
Infinite, indescribable variations;
Each of them ripens sentient beings in indescribable ways.
Indescribable are their languages, miracles, revelations, and ...
An excellent mathematician could not enumerate them ...
The indescribable infinite lands,
All assemble in a hair's tip of Buddha,
Neither crowded nor pressing
Nor does this hair even slightly expand ...
In the hair all lands remain as they are ...^{#12}
Without alteration of forms or displacement ...

The main meaning of the above passage can be summed up in one
sentence: It describes the 'Infinity and Totality' of Buddhahood which
is indescribable.

The idea of the 'INDESCRIBABLE' infinity and Totality of Buddhahood
as the key point goes throughout the passage, and we can also see this
idea in every passage of every other chapter of the HUA YEN.

The Sutra also states that the 'Indescribable' Buddhahood can only
be seen by Buddhas themselves and senior Bodhisattvas who have attained
certain degrees of experience of Buddhahood. One of the chapters

*11 See '1' and TS pp. 238-41. I. C.C. Chang, 'The Buddhist Teaching of Totality', p. 5.
(Original translation, with use of some alternative words, for clarity).

*12 Ibid. pp. 238-41.

'... Thereupon, Bodhisattva Cittaraja addressed the assembly thus: "Listen, oh sons of Buddha, one kalpa (or aeon) in this SAHA world - the land of Buddha Sakyamuni - is one day and one night in the Pure Land of Buddha Amita; and one kalpa in the land of Buddha Amita is one day and one night in the land of Buddha Diamond Strength, and one kalpa in the land of Buddha Diamond Strength is one day and one night in Continuing in this manner, passing millions of indescribable worlds, the last world (of this series) is reached, one kalpa there is again one day and one night in the land of the Supreme Lotus; wherein the Bodhisattva Smantabhadra and all the senior Bodhisattvas now assembled here are also present there, crowding the sky When a Bodhisattva obtains the Ten Perfect Wisdoms (in Deep Meditation) he can then perform the ten universal enterings. What are they? They are: To bring all the universes into one hair, and one hair into all universes; To bring all sentient beings into one body and one body into all sentient beings' bodies; To bring all things in the universe into one thing; To bring an inconceivable number of places into one place, and one place into an inconceivable number of places To make all thoughts into one thought, and one thought into all thoughts; To make all languages and voices into one language and voice (speech) and one language and one voice into all languages and all voices Oh, sons of Buddha, the Bodhisattva who dwells in the state of deep meditation can perceive infinitum, immeasurable, inconceivable, incalculable, unutterable and unutterably unutterable numbers of Samadhis (or Meditations); He sees the infinite Lands, beholds infinite Buddhas, releases infinite sentient beings, realises infinite principles, accomplishes infinite actions, perfect understandings, enters infinite Samadhis, demonstrates infinite miracles, gains infinite wisdom, retains infinite *13 moments and times".'

From the above two quotations, we can see that although they present many ideas such as: 'All-in-one' and 'One in all';

'The finite-in-the-infinite' and 'the infinite in the finite;

'One moment-in-incalculable-aeons' and

'Aeons-in-one-moment';

'The Non-obstruction' (of Size, and Space, and Things etc.) and 'The Great Harmony of all-embracing of Totality of the universe' etc.

All these spring from but one fundamental idea, that is the 'INDESCRIBABLE-INDESCRIBABLE' state and totality of Buddhahood. As Buddhahood is a state beyond our empirical world, therefore everything in it becomes INDESCRIBABLE, UNUTTERABLE, and INCONCEIVABLE to us; and that is why concepts such as 'Time' and 'Space' have lost their meaning.

In spite of considering that the state and totality of Buddhahood is INDESCRIBABLE and UNUTTERABLE, the HUA YEN SUTRA does take eighty great volumes to describe endlessly, how indescribable and unutterable the Buddhahood is. Perhaps this may be the reason why no Indian has been interested enough to comment on the Hua-yen Sutra.

B. THE INTERPRETATION OF 'INDESCRIBABLE-INDESCRIBABLE'

B1. The Empress' questions.

According to reliable historical records, it is said that the Empress of the T'ang Dynasty, Wu Tse-t'ien^{*14} summoned Fa-tsang, the Founder of this School, to the royal palace and questioned him on the doctrines of the Hua Yen Sutra. Fa-tsang thought over the Empress' questions for a while, and instead of giving a verbal explanation, he gave a demonstration, to illustrate the meaning of the Empress' questions. The record states:—

'One day Empress Wu-Tse-t'ien summoned Fa-tsang to the palace and asked him the following questions: "Reverend Master, I understand that Man's knowledge is acquired through two approaches: one is by experience, the direct approach; and the other by inference, the indirect approach. I also understand that the first five Consciousnesses and the eighth Consciousness (Ālaya Consciousness) only take the direct approach; whereas the sixth Consciousness can take both. Therefore the findings of the conscious mind (the sixth Consciousness) are not always trustworthy. The superiority and reliability of direct experience over direct inference is taught in many sutras. You have explained the Hua Yen doctrine to me with great clarity and ingenuity; sometimes I can almost grasp the (principles of) vast things in my mind, and touch a few spots here and there in the great totality; but all this, I realise, is merely indirect conjecture or guesswork. One can not understand Totality in an immediate sense before reaching Enlightenment. With your genius, however, I wonder whether you can give me a

*14 Wu Tse-t'ien 武則天 (684-755)

demonstration that will reveal the mystery of the realms of the totality (of Buddhahood) including such as the 'all-in-one' and 'the one-in-all', the 'simultaneous arising of all realms', the 'Interpenetration and containment of all things', and the 'non-obstruction of Space and Time' and the like?" After taking thought for a while, Fa-tsang promised the Empress that he would *15 give her the demonstration.'

Despite the fact that the 'INDESCRIBABLE' has been detailed in eighty large volumes in the Hua Yen Sūtra itself, the faithful Buddhist Chinese Empress was not satisfied; but demanded a demonstration to illustrate the 'INDESCRIBABLE' in a way which had nothing to do with words.

B2. The Mirror Hall and the 'Golden Lion'

The same record describes . Fa-tsang's demonstration as follows:

'A few days later (after the Empress' questions) Fa-tsang went to the palace and told the Empress that his demonstration was ready. He took the Empress Wu into a room with mirrors. On the ceiling and floor, on all four walls, and even in every corner of the room were fixed huge mirrors - all facing each other. Then Fa-tsang produced an image of Buddha, and placed it in the centre of the room with a burning torch beside it. The Empress was surprised as she gazed at the infinite inter-reflections. Fa-tsang slowly addressed her as follows: "Your Majesty, this is a demonstration of Totality in Realms (of Buddhahood). In each and every mirror within this room you will find the reflections of all the other mirrors with the Buddha's image in them; and in each and every reflection of any mirror you will find all the reflections of all the other mirrors, together with the specific Buddha's images in each, without omission or displacement. The principle of the infinite multiplicity of containment is clearly shown by this demonstration. Here we can see an example of 'One-in-all' and 'All-in-one' - the mystery of 'Realm embracing Realm' and 'Infinity' is thus revealed. The principle of the 'Simultaneous Arising and of Different Realms' is so obvious here that no explanation is necessary ... As for the principle of non-differentiation of Time and Space', this can also be demonstrated in this manner ... I hope this simple demonstration has served its purpose to your satisfaction, *16 your Majesty."

The above quotation shows that neither did the questioner want nor the Master give any verbal description. The principles of the Hua Yen

*15 SKSC, ch. 5, TS L, p. 283 and p. 732. C.C. Chang, The Buddhist Teaching of Totality, p. 22-24. See *11.

*16 Ibid. p. 732.

Sūtra were simply and silently demonstrated, no further explanation being required.

Fa-tsang's chief work is called 'On the Golden Lion', because he used the statue of the Golden Lion guarding the gate to the palace hall as a symbol to illustrate the principles of the Hua Yen Sūtra throughout his lectures. The character of simplicity and silence of Fa-tsang is seen again.*17

3. THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE 'INDESCRIBABLE-INDESCRIBABLE' IN CHINESE THOUGHT

A. Practice of Meditation

As we have mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Tu-shun had written a manual 'On Meditation on the (Realms of Totality of) Buddhahood',*18 in the 6th century, and was thus regarded as the Founder of the School.*19 The seminal thought and characteristic approach to the principles of the Hua Yen Sūtra are clearly shown in this manual. Fa-tsang himself and his chief followers were all inspired by this book, and developed their thoughts following the principles and ideas laid down therein. With regard to the history of Chinese Buddhist thinking, Tu-shun's manual is undoubtedly the most important piece of work of the Hua-yen School; the first treatise on the thinking of the Hua Yen Sūtra in Chinese by a Chinese. It is also the 'INDESCRIBABLE-INDESCRIBABLE' as put into practice.

Tu-shun's Manual consists of three parts, representing three stages of the practice of meditation. As the first paragraph of the Manual says:-

*17 'Chin shih-tzu Chang' 金獅師子章 (On the Golden Lion), TS XL, pp. 663-7.

*18 See '4'

*19 See '9' and '14'

'To meditate on the Great Totality of the vast Buddhahood, three stages of Meditation are necessary:-

- (1) Meditation on the 'Ultimate EMPTINESS'
- (2) Meditation on the 'Non-Differentiation of LI (Substance) and Shih (Phenomenon)
- (3) Meditation on the 'All-embracing Totality' (of *20 the Realms of Buddhahood)'

Each of the three stages consists of ten guiding principles to help the followers in concentration and meditation. They are led step by step from ten different angles through three different stages.

The Manual says:-

'(1) Meditation on "Ultimate EMPTINESS"

To illustrate Meditation on the Ultimate Emptiness, four observations in ten principles are to be considered ...

- (a) The observation of reducing form into Emptiness
- (b) The observation of identifying Emptiness with form
- (c) The observation of the Non-obstruction of Emptiness and form
- (d) The observation of Ultimate Dissolution and Non-attachment.

... ... Contemplate on this and you will understand.

(2) Meditation on the Non-differentiation of LI (Substance) and Shih (Phenomenon)

For this meditation, ten principles are set forth; both the fusion and dissolution of LI (Substance) and Shih (Phenomenon) their co-existence and extinction, and their co-operation and conflict These ten principles are:- 1 .. 2 .. 3 .. 10 ..

(3) Meditation on the All-embracing Totality

To illustrate this point, a further ten principles are set forth:-

1. The principle that LI (Substance) equals Shih (Phenomenon)

Since 'Shih' (phenomena) are vacuous, all forms come to Emptiness; and since the essence of LI (Substance) is real, the body of 'LI' comes into view. 'Shih' is not a 'shih' other than the total 'LI'. When a Bodhisattva (the one who is in meditation) sees 'Shih' he also sees 'LI'. However, the 'Shih' should not be considered to be the 'LI' (of) itself.

2. The principle that 'SHIH' equals 'LI'

'SHIH' is not different from 'LI'; it follows 'LI' and is omnipresent; as a result, every dust-mote is able to embrace the entire universe. (Again) when the total body of the universe is omnipresent in all things, this one dust-mote like 'LI' is also omnipresent in all things.

3. The principle that 'SHIH' includes the Non-differentiation of 'LI' and 'SHIH'

Since 'SHIH' and 'LI' are not one, the 'SHIH' remains

as it is, and yet embraces all. For example, the Form of one dust-mote does not expand, and yet it can embrace the infinite universe. This is because all universes are not separate (or different) from the 'Realms' (of Totality), so they can appear within one dust-mote. All things in their harmonious fusing 'SHIH' and 'LI' are neither identical nor different. 'LI' and 'SHIH' consist of four principles:

First, One in one.
Second, All in one.
Third, One in all.
Fourth, All in all.

4. The principle of Non-differentiation of Universality and Particularity

Since the non-identity of all 'SHIH' and 'LI', a 'SHIH' does not move from its position; but yet it exists in all things. (Again) because this identity is itself their difference, one dust-mote stretches in all directions, yet it does not move away from its particularity. So it is far and yet also near. Stretching and also remaining. There is no obstruction and no hindrance whatsoever.

5. The principle of the Non-differentiation of the 'Large' and 'Small'

Since the non-identity of all 'SHIH' and 'LI' is the selfsame non-difference, a dust-mote is complete in itself yet it contains all the ocean-like universes in every direction. (Again) because the 'Identity' is the 'difference' itself, when one dust-mote embraces all the vast universes (in all directions) it does not expand. This is to say that a dust-mote is wide and also narrow, very big and also very small. There is no obstruction and no impediment.

6. The principle of the Non-differentiation of (all) separation and (all) containment

Because all separating is the same as all-containing, when one (dust-mote) is set against all (universe), it spreads over all, and simultaneously contains all things and includes them within itself. Again, because all-containment is the same as all-separation, one (dust-mote) which contains all, is separating all. It simultaneously embraces all things without dispersion. It simultaneously separates and brings together.

... Contemplate on this, and you will understand.

7. The principle of the Non-differentiation of Entering and Including

Because 'Entering the other thing' is the same as 'Including the other thing', when All things are set against one (thing), the total entering-into-one on the part of all, enables the one, at the same time, to 'return' to its own realm, which includes all without obstruction. Again, One (thing) abides in all (things), it also enables all (things) to remain as one, simultaneously without obstruction.

8. The principle of Interpenetration

When one thing is set against All (other things), it has the including aspect as well as the entering aspect. This can be summarised under four headings:

- First, One includes All, and enters All.
- Second, All includes One, and enters One.
- Third, One includes One, and enters One.
- Fourth, All includes All, and enters All.

9. The principle of simultaneous existence

Setting All (things) against One (thing) there are both the containing and the entering aspects. This again has four headings:

- First, (All) contain one to enter one.
- Second, (All) contain all to enter one.
- Third, (All) contain one to enter all.
- Fourth, (All) contain all to enter all.

They simultaneously interpenetrate one another without obstruction or hindrance.

10. The principle of Universal fusion

This is to say that All and One balance each other; each has the two-fold headings and four sentences just introduced. They become integrated with each other (and simultaneously separated from each other) without any obstruction. Those who practise this Meditation should make an effort to gain the perfect insight in accordance with practice and experience (the great realms of Totality) and without obstruction and hindrance. They should contemplate in depth until this wonderful vision comes into view. *21

B. Identification

From the extracts we have quoted from the Manual, the following points can be observed:

Firstly, when the Chinese mind encountered the 'INDESCRIBABLE-INDESCRIBABLE' of the Hua Yen Sutra, the first thing they wanted to do was to apply the principles of 'Indescribable-indescribable' and 'all-in-one, and one-in-all' etc. ... in contemplation or meditation, rather than to use speech to convince people to accept or believe it.

Secondly, in the Manual, 'Contemplation' becomes the thing which is most emphasised; sentences such as:—

*21 See '4'

'Contemplate on This.'

'Contemplate on this and you will understand.'

'Contemplate on this in depth until the vision
comes into your view'

are found throughout each of the Ten principles of the three different
parts (of the whole).

Finally, the fundamental purpose of the practice of such Meditation
is to nourish one's insight and so enable one to participate in the
experience of the Totality of Buddhahood. The principles of the
'Indescribable' (of Hua Yen Sūtra) were thus put into practice as a
form of meditation. Tu-shun's instruction manual on the techniques
for the practice of meditation has become IDENTIFIED with the 'INDES-
CRIBABLE-INDESCRIBABLE' in China.

C H A P T E R S E V E N

THE PURE LAND SCHOOL AND THE FA-HSIANG SCHOOL; OTHER
ASPECTS OF 'SIMPLICITY' AND 'SILENCE' IN CHINESE BUDDHIST
THINKINGA The Popularity of the Pure Land School

1. All the principles are reduced to one phrase 'I run to Amitabha Buddha as my refuge'.

In addition to the T'ien-tai School and the Ch'an School, there is another popular school of Chinese Buddhism, which preaches its own doctrine neither by speech nor by written words; but merely recites the name of Amitābha Buddha and prays that its followers be born into the Pure Land of Amitābha Buddha. This School is called 'The Pure Land School'. Since what it most emphasises is the practical reciting of the name of Amitābha Buddha, theoretical speech or written words have become of very little importance to this School. Consequently very few philosophers or scholars have paid much attention to it.*1

*1 This school has only been described by a few scholars and that only from a historical or religious point of view. Neither Fung's 'History of Chinese Philosophy' nor Hou Wai-lu's 'Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung shih' mentions it.

In spite of this, many different images have been made of Amitābha Buddha and the Buddhas which are to be found in Lung-men caves and in the caves of Yün-Kang, and in most temples and monasteries - and were worshipped throughout China.*² The name of Amitābha and of 'the Pure Land' were mentioned by the T'ien-tai, Ch'an and other schools of Chinese Buddhism. References to 'Pure Land' School are to be found in Chinese poems, drama and novels. This School has been known to every Chinese for generations. All this shows that the Pure Land School has had a great and significant influence on Chinese life.

The Pure Land School was founded by the monk Hui-yüan during the Northern and Southern Dynasties,*³ Basically, this School adopted the ideas of 'reciting the name of Amitābha Buddha' and 'praying to be born in the "Pure Land" of Amitabha', from the three Sūtras which are:

- 1) The large Sūtra of Amitabha*⁴
- 2) The Sūtra of Meditation on Amitābha*⁵ and
- 3) The small Sūtra of Amitābha*⁶

The Large Sūtra of Amitābha says:

"While Amitābha was still at the stage of Bodhisattva, he made forty-eight vows to save people from suffering by helping them to be reborn in the 'Pure Land' to come.

... In his eightieth vow Amitābha had said, 'When I become a Buddha, if anyone who believes in me wants to be born into my Land he will certainly be accepted and made welcome. He will

*² Fan Wan-lan, 'Chung-kuo t'ung-shih chien-p'ien'. Book III, pp. 570-4.

*³ Although there were Sūtras which dealt with PURE LAND thought, it never became an independent school in India; nor in China before Hui-yüan's time. (Hui-yüan 慧遠, 334-417 A.D.) Cf. note 12 of this chapter.

*⁴ Sukhavativyūha Sūtra, Ta-a-mi-t'o ching 大阿彌陀經 Taisho issaikyo (Chap. 4) 362 in two chuan.

*⁵ Amitāyur-dhyāna Sūtra, Kuan-wu-liang-shou ching 觀無量壽經.

*⁶ Amitāyus Sūtra, A-mi-t'o ching 阿彌陀經 Taisho issaikyo 362 XII

be reborn into my State by reciting my name ten times. If this fails I shall not have the honour of being a Buddha. Evil beings can be accepted too; but not the most evil ones, like those who kill their kings, their parents, or monks. These latter cannot enter the 'Pure Land'.

... Having made his forty-eight vows to^{*7} save people from suffering, Amitābha became a Buddha."

The Small Sūtra of Amitābha says:

"Whoever faithfully recites my name in his mind for one day, for two days, for three days, for four days, for five days, for six days, for seven days continuously, while concentrating on reciting and not distracted by any single thought, I promise that the Holy Beings of the Pure Land and myself certainly will come to him and guide him to be born into my 'Pure Land' when his present lifetime comes to its end."

The technique of 'reciting the name of Amitābha' as a means of praying to be born into the 'Pure Land' is based on ideas from these two Sutras of Amitābha.

The State of the 'Pure Land' is described in the Sūtra of Amitābha (the Small Sūtra of Amitābha) and the Sūtra of Meditation on Amitabha. The people of the 'Pure Land' all possess immortality, infinite light-shining, infinite and perfect wisdom and power. Things automatically appear and disappear before the people of the 'Pure Land' according to their needs. The plants of the 'Pure Land' are all jewels. The ground there is soft as a natural carpet and is covered by golden sands. The wind blows softly all day long, making wonderful and lovely sounds in the trees. Whoever hears the sound of the trees perceives the profound principle of the Buddha's teaching, and more easily enters into the state of en-

*7 See '4'.

lightenment. People in the 'Pure Land' are able to go through countless universes and worship countless Buddhas in the time we would normally take to eat a meal.

These Sūtras describe what the 'Pure Land' is like. Amitabha's vows are the basic doctrine of the 'Pure Land' School and it is from this doctrine that the technique of 'reciting the name of Amitābha' as the means of being born into the 'Pure Land' is developed.

2. Simplicity of Technique

In the discipline of the 'Pure Land' School no difficult learning or studying needs to be done; no abstract nor metaphysical theory needs to be comprehended. All that is required is the practice of reciting the name of Amitābha. Such a practice is simple and easy for every ordinary person to carry out at any time under any circumstances. If we examine this idea of the Pure Land School carefully we can see that the scholars and masters of this School have discovered yet another way, different from the way of Hui-neng, and which is most suited for the Chinese people to practise on their own. Even an illiterate old woman, or a peasant can practise 'Reciting the name of Amitābha' at the same time as they are doing their housework or farmwork. Therefore the 'Pure Land' School became the favourite School of Chinese Buddhist followers, and the technique of this School's discipline became the most popular way for ordinary people to practise Buddhism both in China and in the other countries of East Asia.

The spirit of the 'Pure Land' school with its practice of continuing prayer to be born into the 'Pure Land' and with the external offer of help from Amitābha seems quite the opposite to Hui-neng's discipline which emphasises that one must search into the nature of one's own mind to become a Buddha. In fact, the spirit of the 'Pure Land' is merely another aspect of the spirit of Ch'an Buddhism: both of them being developed from the same practical spirit of Chinese thought. The latter emphasises dispelling all attachments from one's own mind in order to become enlightened; whilst the former concentrates on only one point which is 'Reciting the name of Amitābha', as the easiest way to free oneself from all other attachments of the mind, and so to be born in the 'Pure Land', that state which is free from suffering. The technique of the 'Pure Land' School is the easiest by which one's mind may be freed from attachments, and so be enlightened.*8

The Sutra of Amitābha says:

"To recite the name of Amitabha is one's mind for one day, for two days, for three days, for four days, for five days, for six days, for seven days continuously concentrating on reciting and not disturbed by any single other thought, is a means of helping people to attain complete detachment. This can be seen as a means for practising concentration and meditation, which guides one to one's own enlightenment."

The 'Pure Land' School's technique reminds one of Hui-neng's technique which first brings all external things into the mind as a preparation for dispelling the attachment from one's own mind and then pushes one instantly through the door of enlightenment. If one compares the basic doctrines of the 'Pure Land' School and the School of Ch'an one can see that the ways of thinking of these two schools fundamentally correspond to each other.

*8 See chapter six.

3. Words are unnecessary, but Recitation aids concentration

When the idea of the Amitābha Sutra which recommended the practice of 'Reciting the name of the Buddha' day after day without disturbance by any other single thought, was introduced into China, it was put into practice on a large scale in the daily life of the Chinese people. According to the records of Chinese history, we find the following:

- (1) Monk Huai-yü recited the name of Amitābha fifty thousand times each day.*9
- (2) Monk Shan-tao recited the name of Amitābha every day without cessation. Some of Shan-tao's disciples recited the name of Amitābha one thousand times per day; some of them recited it about ten times, etc.*10
- (3) Chih-i, the founder of the T'ien-tai School, and Hsüan-tsang, the founder of the Fa-hsiang School, both respected the doctrine of the 'Pure Land' School and longed to be born into the 'Pure Land'.*11

Monk Hui-yüan, the founder of the 'Pure Land' School, was a scholar, and other famous scholars and officers such as T'ao-Yuan-ming and Hsieh Ling-yün became followers of Hui-yüan's Society for reciting the name of the Buddha Amitābha.*12 Although Monk Hui-yüan was enthusiastically

*9 Fan Wan-lan, 'Chung kuo T'ung shih' 中国通史. Book III, pp. 570-4

*10 Ibid, p. 570-4

*11 Ibid, p. 570-4

*12 Hui-yüan's biography in CSTCC XV 109 seq. and KSC VI 357.

faithful to the doctrine of Amitābha, he never made any speech on this doctrine, but only practised reciting the name of the Buddha.*¹³ Also in spite of the fact that the 'Pure Land' School never had any intention of preaching its own doctrine to the public, this School has been popular in China for generations. There is a saying which describes the popularity of this School:

"The Bodhisattva Kuan-yin is known by every family; the name of Amitābha Buddha is repeated in every home."*¹⁴

In conclusion, from the above, one can see that in the 'Pure Land' School, speech or written words are simple and even unnecessary, since this School concentrates on the practice of reciting silently in one's mind. Moreover the practice of 'Reciting' is carried out continuously without disturbance by any other thought; all other attachments including words are bound to be discarded completely, otherwise those things or words would become hindrances. The characteristics of the 'Pure Land' are practice and a tendency to use no words. Behind these lie the Chinese characteristics of 'Simplicity' and practical thought. The Pure Land teaching with its tendency towards wordlessness characterises the Chinese taste for simplicity and practice.

B The Decline of the Fa-hsiang School (Dharmalakṣaṇa School) is another Aspect of the Characteristic of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' in Chinese thinking

Like the Schools of Ch'an, T'ien-tai and Pure Land, the Fa-hsiang School was another independent school of Buddhism in China.

1. The Founder

The Founders of the Fa-hsiang School were Hsüan-tsang (596-664 A.D.)*¹⁵ and his disciple K'uei-chi (632-682 A.D.)

*¹³ See '2'.

*¹⁴ See '2'.

*¹⁵ Hsüan-tsang 玄奘, K'uei-chi 窥基.

Hsüan-tsang had gone to India and studied there for sixteen years. After debating with and outshining outstanding Indian scholars, he returned to China in 645 A.D. with 657 Buddhist works. The second Emperor of the T'ang dynasty had asked Hsüan-tsang to be a minister of the State many times. Refusing the Emperor's invitation to take State office, Hsüan-tsang was invited by his Emperor and the State to translate the Buddhist works from Sanskrit into Chinese. With a large group of scholars as his assistants he undertook the largest translation project ever undertaken in the history of China.*16 The basic text of the Fa-hsiang School in India was Master Vasubandhu's 'Vijñātimātratātrim-sika' (Treatise in Thirty Verses on Consciousness-only); but in China, apart from the Vijñātimātratātrim-sika there is another Indian Buddhist work of note which is Dharmapāla's Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi (Ch'eng-wei-shih lun, Treatise on the Establishment of the Doctrine of Consciousness-only). Since 'consciousness-only' is the theme and main fundamental concept of this school, it is also known as 'The School of Consciousness-only'. Although Hsüan-tsang was a very intelligent scholar and his prose is excellent (he was bilingual in Sanskrit and Chinese) his Chinese translation of the Ch'eng-wei-shih lun still had to have its footnotes amounting to sixty long chapters to clarify the complicated, intricate and difficult points in this Indian Treatise.*17

2. The Main Ideas of the Fa-hsiang School

The main ideas of the Fa-hsiang School and the way in which this

*16 Hsüan-tsang's biography, 'Hsü KSC, Taisho issaiyo. Vol. 43, p. 608; Vol. 50, pp. 221-244.

*17 Kuei-chi, 'Ch'eng Wei-shih lun shu-chi' 成唯識論疏記. (Notes on the Establishment of Consciousness-only), Taisho issaiyo, Vol. 31.

school expressed itself have been briefly mentioned in the first chapter. The part of the doctrine of this School which is most in contrast to the Chinese emphasis on practice, and the part which most negatively reflects the characteristic of 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' of Chinese Buddhist expression are as follows:

"Every thing is Consciousness-only" and
"Objects are but transformations of Consciousness-only".

What is the 'Consciousness'? How are things transformed from the 'Consciousness-only'? 'Consciousness' is the key point of the Fa-hsiang School; also the analysis of the idea of 'Consciousness-only', and 'the progress of the transformation of things' (from the Consciousness) became the main subjects to which this School paid greatest attention. Dharmapāla began his treatise, 'The Treatise on the Establishment of the Consciousness-only', with the sentence:

"If everything is nothing but 'Consciousness-only',^{*18} why are there things and living beings in existence?"

Next comes an endless analysis of 'Consciousness' and the progress of transformations from Consciousness:-

"Because of the false ideas of 'There is such a thing as MYSELF' and 'There is such a thing as MINE', all things and their characteristics have come into existence. Both things and their characters are based on Consciousness which is of three kinds. These are the Basic Consciousness which causes all seeds to ripen at a later time; the Consciousness that deliberates and the^{*19} Consciousness that discriminates the sphere of objects."

Basic Consciousness. From the above we can see that before describing in detail the characters of things that are transformed, everything is classified into two fundamental divisions 'Things' and 'Consciousness'. The latter is considered as the substance while the former are regarded

*18 Dharmapāla, 'Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi', Ch'en wei-shih lun 成唯識論. translated by Hsüan-tsang. Taisho issaiyo Vol. 31 p.1, CHTCC part II, LXXXI, pp. 33267-33624.

*19 Ibid, chapter I 'The Main Idea of Consciousness-only', p.1.
cf. CHTCC Part II, pp. 33337.

merely as the manifestations or transformations of this substance.

Consciousness is itself classified into two divisions: 'The Consciousness' itself, and 'the seeds' of this Consciousness. What are called 'Seeds' are the impressions, perceptions and cognitions of the mind. Again, 'Consciousness' itself is classified into three different categories: the Basic Consciousness, Deliberating Consciousness and the Discriminating Consciousness. Again these three kinds of Consciousness are classified into a great number of sub-divisions, and each of them is sub-divided into further minute hair-splitting categories. For instance the third kind of Consciousness which is called 'the Discriminating Consciousness' is classified into six categories:

- I The Discrimination of sight
- II The Discrimination of sound
- III The Discrimination of smell
- IV The Discrimination of taste
- V The Discrimination of feeling
- VI The Discrimination of thought.

Each kind of Consciousness has its differentiation. The qualities of these various kinds of Consciousness are classified into fifty-one different kinds. These are: ^{*20}—

The mental quality of desire, of good understanding, of perception, of meditation and of wisdom. These five are called 'The Five Qualities' which pervade the three kinds of Consciousness. The others are: the qualities of belief, of shame, of being conscience-stricken, of zeal for hard work, of non-greed, of non-anger, of no-illusion, of ease, of generosity and of not injuring. These eleven mental qualities of Consciousness are called 'Not Doing Harm to People' or the 'Good Mental Qualities of Consciousness'; the six mental qualities of greed, of anger, of illusion, of conceit, of suspicion, and of bias are called 'the mental qualities of Root-affliction'. Then there are the twenty mental qualities

*20 Ibid, Vol. III, pp. 1-12; CHTCC, part II, pp. 33338-39.

of 'Accompaniments of Affliction'. These twenty are the mental qualities of unbelief, of excitement, of dullness, of laziness, of looseness, of being incorrect, of loss of concentration, of indignation, of lacking conscience, of hate, of perversity, of annoyance, of jealousy, of miserliness, of doing harm to other people, of flattery, of deceit, and of haughtiness. Finally there are the mental qualities of sleep, of vandalism, of curiosity and of servile lurking; these four are called 'the Unsettled Mental Qualities.'

After these fifty-one mental qualities of Consciousness have been described in detail, one by one, the Fa-hsiang School goes on to describe in further detail the relationship between these fifty-one qualities and the three main kinds of Consciousness and how they intertwine together and are extremely complicated. The explanations become tedious and abstract.

The Seeds Apart from the Consciousness itself, there are numberless seeds which are stored within the Storehouse-Consciousness. What are these seeds in the 'Storehouse'? How do they ripen and manifest themselves in the outside world and then come back into the 'Storehouse' (Consciousness) to become new seeds? These kinds of seeds are described in the Treatise as follows:

"Why are they called Seeds? They are so called because functions and differentiations in the Basic Consciousness produce their own fruitions spontaneously, neither the same as nor different from the Basic Consciousness itself or its fruitions."

Seeds mean something stored within the 'Storehouse Consciousness' which produces its fruition by means of the energy of Consciousness. But what exactly are those Seeds? The Treatise says that some of them are one's perceptions and cognitions:

"Everyone's mind is full of both good and evil perceptions, cognitions and impressions which are made from the circumstances of the external world. As a result of these perceptions, cognitions and impressions one's conduct, deeds, behaviour, etc. appear like fruits ripening from their seeds; therefore, those perceptions, cognitions and impressions which are preserved in the Consciousness of one's mind are called the

'seeds of the Consciousness'. One's perceptions and cognitions are numberless and we say that the Seeds of everyone's Consciousness are countless." (Ch. 2)

These Seeds which are 'Perfumed' by (influenced by or stemming from) the external world are called 'The Perfumed Seeds'. Apart from this, there is another kind of seed which does not come from the external world, and is called the 'Latent Immanent Seed':-

"There are two kinds of Seeds: one kind is called 'The Latent Immanent Seeds' which exist naturally in the Consciousness; the other kind is called 'The Perfumed Seeds' which are produced by the 'perfuming' of the Consciousness by the outside world and the fruits are the result of this influence. Simultaneously their fruition produces new perceptions and cognitions as the new seeds are continually coming into the Consciousness."*22

These two kinds of Seeds are classified into many divisions for purposes of analysis; the 'Perfumed Seeds' are considered to be of two kinds: the good seeds and the evil seeds. As the treatise says:

"The good seeds are the result of the 'Perfuming' of external good things. And the evil seeds are produced by the 'Perfuming' of external things which are evil."

"Before they can come into existence in the Consciousness, as do the good seeds, they are exactly like the hemp which possesses fragrance because it is perfumed by flowers."*23

And so we can see that the characters of the 'Perfumed seeds' are both good and evil (some Perfumed Seeds are good, while some are evil). And both these kinds of seeds have the double characteristic of 'being perfumed' and 'Perfuming', giving them the ability to produce new seeds simultaneously.*24 (Details of this can be found in Chapter 2 of the treatise.)

The other kind of Seeds, 'The Latent Immanent' is classified into five different kinds according to the different abilities of individuals. Whether this kind of 'Seeds' is possessed by someone or not has nothing to do with the external world but is a matter of one's own nature, for

*22 Ibid, II, CHTCC. Part II p. 33343.

*23 Ibid, II, pp. 33343-44.

*24 Ibid, II, pp. 33340-41.

they naturally exist or do not exist within one's Consciousness:-

"The existence and the different divisions of the 'Latent Immanent Seeds' have nothing to do with objective things, either good or evil, but depend on whether one has 'Hindrances' or not. As the treatise of the master of Yogacara Gound says: 'If one has the two fundamental hindrances, this kind of seed is called 'The Seed without ability to go to Nirvana'. A person possessing these seeds can never become a Buddha. If one has the Immanent seed which possesses the Hindrance to wisdom, this kind of seed is called 'the seed-nature in Arhat'. If one has the seeds of the Hindrance to afflictions only, this kind of seed is called 'the seed-nature in Saints'. Finally, the seeds of Non-hindrances which are detached both from wisdom and afflictions, are the kind of seed called 'the seed-nature in Buddha'. All the existences of these kinds of the Latent Immanent Seeds depend on one's own nature and have nothing to do with external things, either good or evil.' Only the last three have the ability to reach *25 Nirvana, the former can never do so."

The Relationship between the Seeds and the Manifestations of these Seeds-

From the foregoing we can see that the progress from Seeds to their manifestations as fruit pivots upon the 'Perfuming' of the seeds. External things are transformed by Seeds; concurrently those transformations perfume the latent seeds within the Consciousness, and also implant new impressions, perceptions and cognitions into the Consciousness, which are new seeds. A stock saying of this School runs:

"A seed produces a manifestation;
A manifestation 'perfumes' a seed;
These three elements (seed, manifestation and perfuming)
turn on and on;
The cause and effect occur at one and the same time."*26

Because of the function of 'Perfuming', the Seeds and Manifestation 'perfume' and produce one another perpetually, which becomes a current, and is a constant stream of either good or evil perceptions, cognitions and ideas in one's consciousness. This principle applies to daily life and throughout all the deeds of people and material things.

*25 Ibid, II. CHTCC, Part II, pp. 33342-43.

*26 Ibid, p. 33343

Furthermore, both the 'Perfumed Seeds' and the 'Latent Immanent Seeds' cannot ripen to their fruition without being 'perfumed':-

"All Seeds ripen to fruition by 'Perfuming'. Even the Immanent Seeds have to be 'Perfumed' before they can become stronger and grow up."

"The perfuming of hearing not only perfumes the evil seeds; whoever hears and receives the instruction of the Buddha, his Immanent Seeds become stronger and stronger, eventually enabling him to transcend this world and enter into Nirvana. This kind of 'perfuming' is called 'The Perfuming of Hearing' which also enables one to get rid of one's evil seeds and to ripen the good and perfect fruit."^{*27}

What exactly is this 'Perfuming' that can bring the seeds to their fruition? The treatise describes it as follows:

"... In this way, the Seeds of the Storehouse Consciousness are perfumed; the perceptions and cognitions of the external world of the Deliberating Consciousness and the Discriminating Consciousness are the 'perfuming' (which can perfume the Seeds within the Storehouse Consciousness). Because they are 'Perfuming', the Seeds are 'perfumed' and 'transformed'."^{*28}

"In this way the Deliberating Consciousness and the Discriminating Consciousness which can 'Perfume' (affect) seeds and the Consciousness which is 'perfumed' arise and perish together, and the concept of 'Perfuming' is thus established. The act of enabling the seeds that lie within what is perfumed to grow, is called 'Perfuming'. As soon as the seeds are produced, the Consciousness which can 'perfume' becomes in its turn the cause which 'perfumes' and produces seeds. These three elements turn on and on ... "^{*29}

The seeds within the Storehouse Consciousness can both produce their own fruits and produce their own new seeds by means of the 'Perfuming'. Since they are the cause of their own fruits, and their own fruits (the effect) are the cause of the new seeds, the constant 'Perfuming' of seeds and their manifestations (as fruits) within the Storehouse Consciousness is considered to flow constantly like a torrent.

As Seeds, Perfume and Fruition depend on each other, transformation of Seeds appear continuously. This is like a torrent and is renounced in the state of the Arhat as the treatise itself says. How to become

*27 Ibid, II, pp. 33347-

*28 Ibid.

*29 Ibid.

free from these attachments? The concern of the Fa-hsiang School is how to stop the evil seeds 'transforming' and how to realise the principle of Consciousness-only and to reach Nirvāṇa.

3. The Limitations and Difficulties of the 'ideal state' of the Fa-hsiang School

The answer to these problems is given in the treatise as follows:-

"As to the nature and character of Consciousness-only, who is to enter into this state? And how may it be done? There are only two kinds of Immanent Seeds which can enable one to realise the principle of Consciousness-only; those people who possess these two kinds of Seeds must pass through five different levels of practice before they enter into the ultimate state of the truth of Consciousness-only.

"What are these two kinds of Seeds (these two kinds of Mahayana-Seeds)? One is the Immanent Seeds which are naturally immanently pure seeds and which exist within the Storehouse Consciousness. The other is the 'Perfumed Seeds' which are 'Perfumed' by the hearing of the Buddha's instructions. One must possess these two kinds of Seeds, and then one can realise the principle of Consciousness-only!"*30. .

We can see that two things are necessary for one to realise 'Consciousness-only'; one is the 'Immanent Seeds' which are naturally good; the other is the 'Perfuming of the Hearing' of the Buddha's instruction. If one does not possess these kinds of 'Immanent Seeds', one can never realise the principle of Consciousness-only, and can never become a Buddha; on the other hand, even if one does possess these kinds of Seeds, but does not have any opportunity of hearing the instruction of the Buddha, one still cannot become an enlightened one. A problem arises: who was the first to be able to become a Buddha and give instruction to other people so that they too could become Buddhas? This first one had to have a former Buddha to give him instruction to 'Perfume' his 'Immanent Seeds' which are naturally good. There is no explanation for this, although everything else is analysed in extreme detail.

*30 Ibid, II. p. 33347.

4. The Causes of the Decline of the Fa-hsiang School; another aspect of the characteristic of preference for 'simplicity' and 'silence' in Chinese Buddhism

The Fa-hsiang School suggests that all things are transformations of one's consciousness by analysing the character and the functions of one's consciousness from which all things are transformed, and describing the character of all things one by one, and pointing out the way in which every particular thing came into existence. This School is thus called the Fa-hsiang School (The School of the Character of Things). Also because this School emphasises Consciousness-only, and makes a detailed analysis of Consciousness, this school is called 'Wei-shih-tsung' (the School of Consciousness-only. Skr, Vijnaptimātra.)

Most of the extant editions of the sutras and Buddhist works in Chinese including the Chinese manuscripts found at Tun-huang are translations of Kumarajīva.*31 Whilst Kumarajīva's works were repeatedly copied by generations of Chinese, few of the works of Hsüan-tsang were given any attention. This shows that although Hsüan-tsang was bilingual in Chinese and Sanskrit and his great translation project was supported by the State and the Emperor, and although Hsüan-tsang had a thousand scholars as his assistants, nonetheless his works were not welcomed by the Chinese people in the same way as those of his predecessor, Kumarajīva.*32 Moreover, although the Fa-hsiang School was one of the independent schools in China and had been supported by the T'ang Emperors throughout its existence, this School declined as soon as Hsüan-tsang died; whereas the T'ien-t'ai, the Pure Land, the Hua-yen, and the Ch'an Schools were still popular. Judging the doctrine of the Fa-hsiang School in the light of the characteristics of 'simplicity' and 'silence' and the practical thought

*31 See 'The Catalogue of Tun-huang's Manuscript' printed by Commercial Press in Peking

*32 Most of the basic texts and treatises of this school were lost and forgotten during the Yüan Dynasty. In 1880 A.D. a number of them were brought back to China from Japan, by Yang Jen-shan 楊仁山, a Chinese scholar, to be reprinted.

of the Chinese, we can see that the causes of the decline of the Fa-hsiang School were:

First of all such favourite Indian subjects as 'the nature of things', 'the characters of things' and abstractions which have little to do with moral practice etc. are retained in Hsuan-tsang's translations. Also, the way in which Hsuan-tsang's translations are expressed is the traditional Indian way, which always analyses external things in complicated, difficult and endlessly hair-splitting ways;

Secondly, Hsuan-tsang translated his Indian texts strictly and forgot his own nation's tendency for 'simplicity' and 'practice', avoiding abstract theories and complicated analyses of external things.

Thirdly, Hsuan-tsang's Fa-hsiang School adheres to the point of view of Indian Buddhism which asserts that a certain number of people do not possess the seed of Buddha (Buddha-seed) and can never become Buddhas. This idea of the Buddha-seed is quite contrary to the Chinese tradition which advocates cultivating one's own mind and identifying one's own conduct with that of the sages. It is very difficult for the Chinese mind to accept that some people have no hope of becoming Buddhas since the Chinese believe that everyone has the potential to become a sage like Yao (堯) and Shun (舜) if they want to. Therefore the Fa-hsiang School declined rapidly whilst the contemporary schools remained popular, because they emphasised that everyone's mind is pure by nature. Everyone can become a Buddha if they see through the nature of their own minds, and everyone who is accepted to be born in the 'Pure Land' can eventually become a Buddha.

Finally, if we look back to Confucius' sayings, we find another basic feature of the Fa-hsiang School's doctrines, which brought about the decline of this School. As Confucius himself said: 'Is JEN (仁) far away? (Is it difficult for one to be a virtuous man?) Whenever I want to be JEN, I am instantly JEN (Whenever one wants to be a Virtuous Man one has instantly already become a Virtuous Man). The

manifestations of this idea of Confucius in Chinese Buddhism are: the idea of Tao-hseng 'one is able to become a Buddha instantly whenever one develops insight into one's own mind'; the T'ien-t'ai School's idea of 'Concentrating and meditating on the mind, so that one's Ignorance turns into pure understanding, and one enters into the state of enlightenment'; the saying of Hui-neng: 'A previous single thought which is deluded makes one an ordinary man, while the next single thought gets rid of illusion and makes one become a Buddha.'^{*33} 'Is the Pure Land far away from us?' Hui-neng asked. 'It is far indeed to the people who do not know that Amitābha Buddha and his Pure Land are within our own minds; for people who know that the Pure Land and Amitābha are within their own minds, it does not matter whether they are born in this world or in the Pure Land. They are always free and comfortable.'

The manifestation of this idea of Confucius can also be seen in the Pure Land School as follows:

'If one practises reciting the name of Amitābha for one day, for two days, for three days, for four days, for five days, for six days, for seven days continuously without being disturbed by a single thought, one certainly shall be born into the Pure Land. The holy beings of the Pure Land and Amitābha himself will certainly meet such a person, welcome him, and help him to be born there when his present lifetime comes to its end. All beings are accepted, except for the most evil ones who have killed their parents or have killed their emperor, or have killed monks. They are not welcomed.'^{*34}

In contrast to these Schools of Chinese Buddhism quoted above, the Fa-hsiang School of Hsuan-tsang does not harmonise with traditional native thinking, but opposes it. This School asserts that not everyone can become a Buddha since it is essential to have the inborn capabilities which are the 'Immanent Seeds'. This School also suggests that one

*33 See Chapters IV, V and VI.

*34 CHTCC, Part II, pp. 30071-30075.

must wait for one's immanent seeds to ripen and also for the particular external circumstances to come about, thus causing the seeds to ripen. The seeds do not ripen on their own; if the particular external condition does not arise by which the seeds are perfumed, there is no way by which one can reach Buddhahood. Neither can one help oneself to become a Buddha, even supposing he meets the right external conditions. In short, in the eyes of the Fa-hsiang School, one's enlightenment is conditioned merely by chance and by external circumstances. Even if one disciplines himself perfectly one must still wait until the necessary circumstances have arisen. It is impossible to become a Buddha instantly; it is logically impossible for one to become a sage instantly whenever one wishes to; and so also logically impossible for 'everyone to become sages like YAO and SHUN'.

Because so many ideas which are out of harmony with the Chinese traditional mind underlay the doctrines of the School of Hsüan-tsang, this School did not become sinicised like the other schools, but was rather *disliked* by the Chinese people.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE WORDLESS TEACHING OF THE CH'AN SCHOOL

A. A Brief History of the School

The School which came after T'ien-t'ai, and developed further theory of 'The Pure-nature of The Mind', is Ch'an Buddhism*¹ known as 'ZEN' in Japan. The doctrine of the Ch'an School is traditionally summarized in the following stanza:

"Without using words, transcending all written texts, point directly into one's own mind, and so see into one's own nature and become a Buddha."*²

The 'Mind' refers to the nature Ch'an thought, whilst 'Point Directly' is the teaching technique which dispenses with words and speech.

Ch'an Buddhism is considered by modern scholars in the West, in Japan, and even in China itself, to have begun during the T'ang Dynasty*³ under Hui-neng*⁴. But the majority of monks and laymen have wholeheartedly and faithfully regarded their School to have originated from the Buddha himself, and to have been brought by the monk, Bodhidarma*⁵ who came to China during the Liang Dynasty (502-549 A.D.). According to numerous historical records, this belief has been held by the Buddhist followers for more than twelve centuries.

*¹ Ch'an-tsung. 禪宗.

*² This is a classical saying of this School, to be found in most of the records of the Ch'an School. cf. Chan's 'A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy' p.428.

*³ These scholars are: Wing-tsit Chan, D.T. Suzuki, et, alia, See Chan's Source Book. XXVI, pp.425-430; Suzuki's Essays on Zen Buddhism. First series, p.191; Fung Yu-land's History IX. pp.771-776; and Hau Wai-lu, et, alia, 'A General History of Chinese Thought', IV. pp.151-152.

*⁴ Hui-neng. See 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch', Ch. I, pp.824-828; 849-850. CHTCC. Part.II; SKSC, VIII; Ts.L, pp.754-755; cf. Hou Wei-lu, et, alia, 'A General History of Chinese Thought', IV, p.151;263.

*⁵ Bodhidarma (460-543 A.D.). See '8', '13'.

There is a story tells us that when the Buddha told his disciples that he was leaving this world and going to enter into Nirvāṇa, most of the disciples were very sorry to hear such news, and wept. Holding a flower, the Buddha said with a smile:

"My dear disciples, it is time for me to leave you all and pass away from this world. Although I have taught nearly forty-nine years, really I have not said a single word."

Hearing what the Buddha said, all his disciples were confused and puzzled. Mahākāśyapa was the only one who turned his tear into a smile.

Seeing Mahākāśyapa smiling, the Buddha said:

"My esoteric teaching of the Essence of the Mind, which is the embodiment of all principles and their reality, has been transmitted to Mahākāśyapa."⁶

On account of this, Mahākāśyapa is regarded as the first patriarch of the School. Since then, the esoteric teaching of 'The Essence of The Mind' is believed to have been transmitted by generations of this School. The Ch'an School called this 'The Transmission from mind to mind without the use of the written texts'. Finally, it was Transmitted to Bodhidharma who was the twenty-eighth patriarch of this School in India, and so the first patriarch in China.

The story of the Transmission of the Ch'an teaching from Bodhidharma to the Chinese monk Hui-k'o, the second patriarch, is recorded as follows:

"Bodhidharma had been sitting with his face to a wall for nine years. Hui-k'o came to him and asked him the doctrine of the 'Enlightened Mind'. Bodhidharma paid no attention to him, until Hui-ke cut off his own arm to prove his sincerity. Then Bodhidharma said: "What are you here for?"
Hui-ke replied: "I wish you to comfort and settle my mind, Oh Venerable One."
Bodhidharma said: "Alright, show me your mind, then I shall comfort and settle it for you."
Hui-k'o replied: "I have been looking for my mind everywhere, but have not been able to find it, my Venerable Teacher."
Bodhidharma said: "I have comforted and settled your mind!"
Hearing what Bodhidharma said, Hui-k'o then instantaneously attained Enlightenment, and became the second patriarch."⁷

⁶ Tao-yüan, Ching-te Ch'uang-teng Lu (The Transmission of the Lamp) Ts.L1; Fan Wen-lan, Ch'ing-kuo Tung-shih Chien-p'ien. III, p633-5.

⁷ Hui-k'o (487-593 A.D.). Ibid. . . Suzuki's Essays in Zen Buddhism, First series, pp.176-177; Second series, pp.24-25. (Original translation with use of some alternative words for clarity).

The third Patriarch was Seng-ts'an; the fourth, Tao-hsin; and the fifth, Hung-jen.*⁸ Under the teaching of Hung-jen, two branches were developed; the Gradual Enlightenment School in Northern China, and the Instantaneous Enlightenment School in the South. The former was headed by Shen-hsiu (600-706 A.D.)*⁹ whilst the latter was headed by Hui-neng (638-713 A.D.)*¹⁰ Hui-neng was the sixth patriarch as he was the one who had the enlightened mind transmitted from the fifth patriarch. This had not happened to Shen-hsiu, for when, at the patriarch's request, he submitted a stanza to show whether he had attained enlightenment, the patriarch said:

"Your stanza shows that, so far, you have only reached the door, but you have not yet entered it. You had better go and think it over for a couple of days and submit another stanza to me. If it shows that you have entered the door, you shall be the sixth patriarch."

Shen-hsiu did not manage to do so.

The transmission of the Mind between the fifth and sixth patriarch is recorded as follows:-

"The sixth patriarch said: "... ... My master expounded The Diamond Sūtra to me, and when he came to the sentence 'One should free one's mind from all attachments whatever the occupation of the moment', I at once, became thoroughly enlightened, and realised that all things in the universe are the essence of the Mind alone. And I was dumb-struck to realise that the essence of the mind is intrinsically pure, intrinsically free from creation and annihilation, intrinsically free from change and intrinsically self-sufficient!" Knowing that I had realised the nature of my own mind, my master said to me: "For one who does not know his own mind, there is no use in learning Buddhism. If someone knows his own mind and sees intuitively the nature of his mind, he is a World-Honoured One, a Teacher of Gods and Mankind; such a man is a Buddha."*¹¹

After Hui-neng passed away, five branches developed. These were the Ts'ao-tung, the Lin-chi, the Yün-men, the Kuei-yang, and the Fa-yen

*⁸ 僧 茲 通 信 弘 忍.
Seng-ts'an, Tao-hsin, and Hung-jen. See 'Fung's History IX, p.772; Hou Wei-lu et, alia, History IV, p.263. cf. Wing-tsit Chan's 'Source Book XXIV, pp.425-426.

*⁹ 神 秀
Shen-hsiu, SKSC, VII; Ts.L. pp.754-755; cf. Hou Wai-lu, et, alia, General History IV. 151; pp.263-264.

*¹⁰ See '4' and '9'.

*¹¹ CHTCG. Part II. 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch', Ch.I, pp.824-828.

Schools.*¹² These Schools developed methods such as using a stick to hit the questioner or, shouting at a student who came up to ask a question, or, cutting off the questioner's finger, or, cancelling the words of the questioner's question by forgetting the main point of the question itself.*¹³ The master of these five Schools guided their followers through the door of Instantaneous Enlightenment of the Mind. What is now called Ch'an Buddhism (known as ZEN in Japanese) is mainly Hui-neng's teaching, and the five branches of thought that grew out of them.

The followers of Ch'an seek to understand not the principles or truth of external things, but one's own 'Mind'. This is called 'Mind-realisation'.*¹⁴ An enlightened teacher uses the light of his own mind to enlighten the minds of his students, and to guide them to the same state of truth. Such a teaching is received and transmitted directly from mind to mind, through generation after generation. Ch'an followers themselves called it 'The transmission of the Mind' or 'The transmission of the Lamp'.*¹⁵

B. The Teaching which reduces All Objects to the Mind

1. The Concept of the Mind

Ch'an Buddhism is very concerned with the Mind; but what is this 'Mind'? The meaning of the Mind in Ch'an Buddhism can be seen mainly in the lectures of Hui-neng. The record of his lectures is generally called 'The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch'.

The first chapter of the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch mentions that one day the Fifth Patriarch assembled all the disciples and told them to go and seek for pure understanding in their own minds, and then to write a stanza about it. If there was anyone who understood what the Essence of the Mind was, then the Patriarch would transmit both his esoteric teaching

*¹² Ts'ao-t'ung (known as 曹洞), Lin-chi (Linzi) 臨濟, Yün-men (雲門), Kuei-yang (圭仰), and Fa-yen (法眼).

*¹³ These techniques are known as 'Kung-an' ('Kōan' in Japanese), found throughout 'The Records of the Transmission of the Lamp' et, alia. Ts.LI. cf. Suzuki's Essays, Second series I, pp.1-165.

*¹⁴ 明心 Minghsin (Achievement of Awareness of the Mind), or Chieng-hsing 見性 (Achievement of understanding of the Nature of the Mind).

*¹⁵ In Chinese 'Ch'uan-hsin' or 'Ch'uan-teng'. 傳心, 傳燈.

and his position to that person; who would thus be the Sixth Patriarch of the School. Two disciples handed in stanzas; the first being the monk Shen-hsiu:

"Our body is the tree of Bodhi,
And our minds are like a bright mirror.
Carefully, we wipe them from time to time
Lest dust should fall upon them."*16

Reading Shen-hsiu's stanza, the Fifth Patriarch knew his disciple had not realised the nature of his own mind, so he sent for Shen-hsiu and told him that, so far, he had reached the door of enlightenment but had not yet opened it and entered in.

The second stanza handed in was Hui-neng's:

"Bodhi has never had any tree,
nor is there any bright mirror.
Since from the very beginning there has been *only* non-being,
Whereon then, can any dust fall?"*17

As soon as the Fifth Patriarch read Hui-neng's stanza, he knew that Hui-neng's mind had touched the enlightened mind of Buddhas and all Patriarchs, and that he had become enlightened. Hui-neng thus became the Sixth Patriarch of the School.

From the above we can see that there are two points of view about the Mind. Firstly, Shen-hsiu considered that this Mind can be both PURE and IMPURE; one should diligently discard all the impurities in order to purify it. This is what Shen-hsiu aims at. The other point of view is that the Mind can neither be made impure by (Spiritual) dust, nor be as pure as the bright mirror. This is the MIND of Hui-neng which transcends both purity and impurity, and which was transmitted to him from his master.

That the Sixth Patriarch's MIND is neither pure nor impure can be seen in the same sutra as follows:

- (1) "The Sixth Patriarch said to his first disciple who came up to him to ask a question, 'Sir, refrain from thinking and keep your mind free from any attachments. Then answer me, when you are thinking neither of good nor evil, what is the state of your mind at this particular moment?' Doing what he was told, that disciple looked into his own mind, gained insight, and became enlightened instantaneously."*18

*16 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch' Ch.I, CHTCC, Part II, p.825
 *17 Ibid. p.826
 *18 Ibid. p.827

(2) "Hui-neng said: 'The ideal one neither practices good nor commits evil. Calm and silent, he transcends all sensations such as seeing and hearing. His mind abides nowhere.'"#19

(3) Hui-neng explained the meaning of 'GREAT':
 "My disciples, what does 'GREAT' mean? It means that the capacity of the Mind is as great as space itself; it is infinite, neither round nor square, neither green nor yellow, neither red nor white, neither long nor short, neither angry nor happy, neither right nor wrong, neither good nor evil, neither first nor last. It is as empty as space itself."#20

To sum up all the above sayings, the meaning of the MIND in the Ch'an School is that the Mind transcends both purity and impurity, good and evil, and all extremes. Ch'an Buddhism is thus partly grounded on the 'Gainlessness' of Prajñā thought and its Double Truth which discards and transcends extremes of all kinds; Prajñā doctrine suggests that whenever one has purified oneself of sin and discarded evil, in order to be a pure and virtuous person, one should not become attached to remaining in this state, but make a further step to transcend all the ideas of purification one has gained. Such a person is then able to attain the ultimate state of Emptiness. Taking over the idea of GAINLESSNESS in Prajñā thinking, which has no extremes, Hui-neng did not follow its way of 'External-conditioned Emptiness', but returned to the theories of the Mind and Humanism of the T'ien-t'ai School and Confucianism.*21

By taking over the ideas of Gainlessness from Indian Prajñā thought and going back to Chinese traditional ideas of 'The Pure nature of the Mind' and 'Human nature is originally good' the Ch'an masters' idea of the Mind was founded neither on Purity nor Impurity.

Many well-known Ch'an Buddhist scholars in the modern world have asserted that Ch'an Buddhism is in complete opposition to Indian

*19 Ibid. Ch.X, p.850

*20 Ibid. Ch.II, p.828

*21 See Chapters I, II, and IV, of this thesis.

Buddhist thought, or have concluded that Ch'an Buddhism is a Buddhist revolution.*²² From what has been said above, and from the teaching of the T'ien-t'ai School as stated in the previous chapter, one can see that the basic teaching of the Ch'an School is actually derived from the Prajna sutras, and is also in complete harmony with the native mind of China.

2. The Teaching

Hui-neng's master told him that for one who does not realise his own mind, there is no use in learning Buddhism; if one knows his own mind and sees through his nature intuitively, then he is a World-Honoured One, a Teacher of Gods and mankind, and this one is a Buddha.*²³ Hui-neng himself also said:

"'Great' means that the Mind's capacity is as great as that of the void."*²⁴

These statements show that if one can only understand one's own mind then one can properly understand everything else. To understand the Mind is the most important thing for a follower of Ch'an Buddhism to do; other things are secondary. Therefore, Ch'an masters have said:

"Without using words, transcending all written texts, point directly into one's own mind, and so see into one's own nature and become a Buddha."*²⁵

This is what they called 'Direct Pointing'. Direct Pointing is also their teaching technique for guiding their students to enlightenment directly, without use of words or speech. Hui-neng used words to draw all external things into the one concept of 'Mind' first, as a preparation for the wordless technique of 'Direct Pointing'. When all things (which exist as concepts) are drawn into the one concept of one's own mind, one's thinking is made to concentrate on only one point which is the mind itself. Thus the master has no need to bother about giving his disciples instruction at the

*²² See '3' and Chan's 'Source Book' Ch.26, p.425. Hu Shih, Ch'an Buddhism in China, 'Philosophy East and West', 3, (1953), p.12. Suzuki, 'Zen: A Reply to Hu Shih'. Ibid. p.40.

*²³ Ibid.

*²⁴ Ibid.

*²⁵ See '2'

particular moment at which the 'Pointing' is in operation. This enables the master directly and efficiently to push the student through the door of enlightenment and to realise his own mind instantaneously at the same moment the 'Pointing' is taking place.

Before considering 'Pointing', we should just discuss the teaching which reduces all things into the one concept which is the mind. In order to understand the idea of 'Reducing things into the one mind' more clearly, it is necessary to look back at the meaning of External-conditioned Emptiness of Prajñā Sūtras.

This 'Emptiness' has numerous classifications according to different things (objects), and so there are numerous categories of EMPTINESS in Indian Buddhism. Things were considered to be Empty by nature since they were externally conditioned without nature of their own. This is known as 'Conditioned Emptiness'. In order to expel prejudices from 'This' and 'That', Prajñā doctrine used to say that both were EMPTY (by nature). Should one be held in thrall by one's own desires, craving, greed or pride, the Prajñā sutras repeat that nothing can be gained, they are but phenomena. Guiding one to such a concept of 'EMPTINESS' Prajñā doctrine makes one abandon the things one has held and been tied to, and so become free from attachments.

Since people are numberless, desires, pride, and feelings are numberless, and accordingly, the 'Emptiness' of different kinds of things are as incalculable as the grains of sand. For instance, in the Diamond Sutra which is one of the most concise of the whole body of the Prajñā Sūtras, there is a passage which goes as follows:

"The Buddha said to one of his disciples, Subhūti:
'Oh my disciple, Subhūti, all bodhisattvas and Maha-bodhisattvas should discipline their thought as follows:-

all beings of whatever class, born from eggs, from wombs, from moisture, or by transformation, with or without form, whether in a state of either 'Thought' or 'Thoughtlessness' or in a state of 'Neither Thoughtfulness/nor Thoughtlessness' (if all these were led) by me to enter into Nirvana, when these vast uncountable, immeasurable numberless beings are thus led to Nirvana, it is true that there is no-one who has been led there. Why (is this so?) Subhuti? It is because if a bodhisattva has the idea of there being such a thing as 'Myself' or 'Himself' or 'Themselves', and such a thing as a 'Lifespan' of something or someone, this Bodhisattva is not really a bodhisattva."*26

The Sūtra first classifies 'Being' into twelve kinds:

born from eggs, wombs, etc., every being is considered to be able to include the concepts of 'Myself', 'Himself', 'Themselves' and 'Lifespan'. As these twelve kinds of Being are EMPTTY by nature, then concepts of 'Myself', 'Himself' 'Themselves' and 'Lifespan' are EMPTTY too.

The Heart Sutra, a popular sūtra in China, is the most brief and concise account of the Prajñā Sūtras and can be considered as a summary. This sutra is not more than three hundred words in length, but still has the characteristics of Indian speech. It classifies things into various kinds and from various angles to explain the same point of view (of Emptiness). This can be seen as follows:-

- a) The Five kinds of SKANDHA, (Aggregation) and its corresponding Emptiness:-

The Sūtra says:

"The Bodhisattva of Compassion, when he meditated deeply, saw the Emptiness of all the five Skandhas and sundered the bonds that caused him his suffering. Oh, my disciple, Sāriputrā! FORM is no other than EMPTINESS, EMPTINESS is no other than FORM. Therefore, FORM is EMPTINESS, EMPTINESS is FORM."*27

Therefore, Form is Emptiness, Emptiness is Form. Feeling, thinking, choosing and abandoning, and Consciousness itself, all are the same as this!.*28

*26 Ching-kang Pan-jo Po-lo-mi Ching. (The Diamond Sūtra). Ts.VIII, p.748

*27 Pan-jo Po-lo-mi hsin Ching. (The Heart Sūtra). Ts.XVI. p.552

*28 Ibid. pp.552-553

- b) 'The Emptiness of the Characters of external things'
'Decrease and Increase' and 'Impurity and Purity'

In the Heart Sutra, the Buddha has said:

"Sariputra, all things are primarily empty.*(see a)
They are neither impure nor pure; and they are neither
increase nor decrease."*29

- c) 'The six sensations and the objects they sense are Empty'

The Buddha said:

"Sariputra, therefore with the EMPTINESS, there are no
eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind; nor is there
colour, sound, smell, taste, touch, nor what the mind
takes hold of"*30

- d) 'The Emptiness of the Extent of perception of the senses'

The Buddha said:

"Neither are there realms of eyes, ears, nose, tongue,
body, and mind!"*31

- e) 'The Emptiness of the Twelve Causation-conditioned Things'

The Buddha said:

"Sāriputrā, there are no such things as the twelve links
in the chain of things in existence."*32 "There is no
Ignorance nor end of it, no withering, no death, nor end
of them!"*33

- f) 'The Four Truths : Wisdom and their Attainment'

In the Heart Sūtra, the Buddha said:

"Neither is there suffering nor cause of suffering,
nor noble path to lead from suffering, nor Nirvāṇa,
nor wisdom and its attainment!"*34

The ways in which Prajñā Buddhism expresses the principle of
'Emptiness' or 'Gainlessness' of things is according to the divisions
of different things which men possess; accordingly, men have different
illusions, and desires, and so, The Prajñā sūtras repeat the words
Gainlessness and Emptiness over and over again. Whenever someone
sees through the fact that things are empty in themselves, he will not
hold on to anything any longer and will be free from any attachment.

*29 Ibid.

*30 Ibid.

*31 Ibid.

*32 Ibid.

*33 Ibid.

*34 Ibid.

This is Prajna's ideal state, this is 'Nirvāṇa'. As the Heart Sūtra says:

"Bodhisattvas holding on to nothing whatever, but dwelling in Prajñā (Pure Understanding) are free from delusive hindrances and reach Nirvana."

This means that whenever a Prajñā Master points out that one thing is empty in itself, he has to point out that there are many angles to that thing he has mentioned, and then to show that the same number of angles are themselves empty as well. Therefore, each time he explains the same point of view of Emptiness, he has to say twice or thrice as much again about these angles before the point of Emptiness can be brought out. Because of this method, the body of Prajñā Sūtras developed into six hundred large Volumes.

It is said that the whole period of the Buddha's teaching lasted for forty-nine years; and for nearly twenty-two of them he preached the Prajñā sūtras. The Buddha himself also said that the meaning of EMPTINESS was infinite.³⁵ The Buddha and the Prajna masters preached the theory that 'EMPTINESS' could never be explained entirely, even after many thousands of years. This illustrates the Indian way of speech and thought, as has been shown in the first chapter.

Having studied and absorbed Indian Buddhism for several hundred years³⁶ the Chinese adapted Indian Buddhist ideas to their own native way of thinking. During the Sui and T'ang Dynasties, Chinese scholars expressed the Prajna theory that numerous objects are reduced to one point, which is the concept of mind (itself), by means of using opposing sentences to negate students' questions. This removed their delusions and gave them insight into their own minds, and into the principle of EMPTINESS. They avoided the

³⁵ T'ang Chun-i, 'Chung-kuo Che-hsueh Yüan-lun' (The Development of Chinese Philosophy) III.

³⁶ Buddhism came to China in 58 A.D., Hui-neng died in 713 A.D.

complex words of the Indian masters in their explanations. This transformational process is best reflected in Hui-neng's Ch'an Buddhism.

Having heard the sentence in the sutra:

"One should use one's own mind in such a way that it abides in nothing and is free from any attachment"

Hui-neng himself instantaneously became enlightened, and he said that he was 'dumb-struck' to realise that all things in the universe were creations of the mind itself.*³⁷ As all things are considered to exist only as concepts in the mind, they can be reduced by the same mind, to one concept, the mind itself. Whenever this single concept is discarded, the mind is free from all attachments, and the state of enlightenment has been reached. Such is Hui-neng's teaching and technique.

In Hui-neng's view, the key to enlightenment is the Mind. Hui-neng's teaching, which brought all concepts into the one concept of 'Mind' itself, has been illustrated as follows:-

a) 'The Pure Land of Buddha is in one's own mind'

Prefect Wei asked:*³⁸

"I notice that it is a common practice for monks and laymen to recite the name of Amitābha with the hope of being born to Amitābha's Pure Land which is in the West. To clear up my doubts, will you please tell me whether it is possible for them to be reborn there or not?"

Hui-neng replied:

"Listen to me carefully, sir. According to the sutra spoken by the Buddha himself in Śrāvastī city, it is clear that the pure land of the West is not far from here, for the distance is 108,000 miles, which really represents (Symbol) the 'Ten evils' and 'Eight errors' within us. To those dull people of inferior mentality it certainly is far away; but to those wise ones, it may be said that it is quite near. Although the principle is the same, men vary in their mentality, because people

*³⁷ See '11'

*³⁸ Prefect Wei 韋刺史

are different from one another in their understanding (or non-understanding). Therefore, some understand the same principle more quickly than others; whilst ignorant men recite the name of Amitābha and pray to be born in the 'Pure Land'. For as the Buddha said:

"When the mind is pure then one's own Buddha-land is also pure." You may be a native of the East, but if your mind is pure, you are sinless. On the other hand, even if you were a native of the West, an impure mind could free one from sin. When the people of the East commit sin, they recite the name of Amitābha and pray to be reborn in the West's pure land; but when natives of the West are sinners, where can they pray to be reborn? As they are ignorant, they cannot understand the essence of the mind, and the pure land is really within themselves, so they seek to be born in the East or West. But for the understanding ones, it does not matter where they are born. It is as the Buddha said:

"No matter what happens to them, they are always happy and comfortable." So sir, if one is free from evil, the Pure Land of the West is not from here; but difficult indeed it would be for one with an impure mind to be born there, by invoking Amitābha!"*39

Accordingly, both this world and the Buddha-land of Amitābha are to be found in our minds.

b) Buddhahood is within the mind

The sutra of Hui-neng says:

"We should work for Buddhahood within the true essence of the mind, and we should not look for it outside ourselves. One who is in ignorance of the essence of the mind, is ordinary; One who is enlightened about the essence of his own mind is a Buddha. ... My learned and good friends, our own Buddhahood is to be found within our own minds. ... My learned and good friends, a man's thought is attached to objects; and so he is ordinary. But when his thought becomes detached, he is a Buddha.*40 The first moment of thinking which attaches to objects is that of affliction. The next moment of thinking which detaches from objects is that of Bodhi (Enlightenment)."*41

According to what Hui-neng says, there is no difference between the Buddha and one's own mind. The Buddha is the Mind itself.

*39 CHTCC. Part.II, 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch', Ch.III, pp.813-832.

*40 Ibid. Ch.II, p.829

*41 Ibid.

- c) Sila (Precepts), Samādhi (Meditation), and Prajñā (Wisdom),
are all in one's Mind.

Sila, Samādhi, and Prajñā are considered to be the basic disciplines
for every Buddhist disciple to practise in his daily life. Hui-neng
brought all of them back into the Mind as follows:-

"For a fair mind, observation of Sila (Precepts), is unnecessary.
For straightforward behaviour, practise in Samādhi, may be dis-
pensed with."*42 "... The mind that has always been free from
all impurities is Sila by nature. The mind that has always
been free from all disturbance is Samādhi by nature. The mind
that has always been free from illusions is Prajñā by nature."*43

- d) The Four Great Vows are brought into One's Mind

The four Great Vows of Mahāyāna Buddhism are as follows:-

"However innumerable beings there are,
I vow to save them all.
However inexhaustible the passions are,
I vow to extinguish them all.
However immeasurable the teachings of Buddha are,
I vow to master them all.
However incomparably high the Buddhahood is,
I vow to attain it."*44

The objects of Mahāyāna thought are: 'Innumerable', 'Inexhaustible
passions', 'Immeasurable teachings', and the 'Incomparably high Buddhahood',
which all are thus brought into the one concept of the Mind itself, as
follows:-

"However immeasurable beings are, they are all manifestations
of the nature of my mind, I vow to save them all. However
inexhaustible passions are, they all derive from the nature of
my mind, I vow to extinguish them all. However incomparably
high the Buddhahood is, it is derived from my mind, I vow to
attain it."*45

- e) The Three-fold Refuges within the Mind

The Three-fold Refuges of Mahāyāna Buddhism are as follows:-

"I run to the Buddha as my refuge.
I run to the teaching of the Buddha as my refuge.
I run to the monastic community as my refuge."*46

These Three Refuges can be seen to be objective, rather than subjective.

But Hui-neng developed this idea in a Chinese way:-

*42 Ibid. Ch.III, p.832
*43 Ibid. Ch.VIII, p.844
*44 Ibid. p.
*45 Ibid. Ch.VI, p.835
*46 See '43'

"My dear Learned and Good friends, each of you should consider and examine this point for yourself ... lest your energy be misapplied. The Sūtra distinctly says that we should take refuge in the Buddha, it does not suggest that we should take refuge in external Buddhas. Moreover, if we do not take refuge in the Buddha who is within us, there is no other place for us to go. Having cleared this up, let each of us take refuge in the Three-fold Refuges within our own minds."*47

Hui-neng's teaching stresses two points:-

(i) Based on the 'Gainlessness' (Idea) of the Prajñā, and its Double Truth, and resolution of extremes, he establishes his doctrine of the Mind which recalls the theory of the Mind of the T'ien-t'ai School, and Confucianism.*48

(ii) He instructed his followers in this way:

"Buddha is within us, if we do not take refuge in the Buddha within, there is no other place for us to go." He also said: "The mind is neither pure nor impure, neither good nor evil, neither THIS nor THAT, neither HERE nor THERE, it is as empty as space itself."*49

This is like telling someone who is walking to the West, to go back to the East, and then telling him that there is no way back to the East, just as he turns back. This seems quite contradictory, but in it lies the key to the 'Discipline of the Mind'. The person giving the advice does not want the follower who is going to the West, to be attached to the West-ward-way, and so he tells him to go back to the East. Nor does the adviser want the follower to be attached to the East-ward-way, so he tells him that there is no way back to the East. Likewise, Hui-neng reduced all concepts to the single concept of the Mind as he wanted his followers' minds not to be attached to external objects (concepts). At the same time, he told his followers that the Mind is neither THIS nor THAT, and that it is as empty as space itself. This is because he did not want his followers to become attached to the internal object of the Mind either. Therefore, Hui-neng himself regarded 'Non-attachment'

*47 CHTCC. Part II, 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch' Ch.VI, p.836

*48 See '21'

*49 See '17' and '20'

as the basis of his teaching:-

"My Good and Learned friends, it has been the tradition of our School to take 'FORMLESSNESS' as the essence of our teaching, 'NON-ATTACHMENT' as the basis, and 'DETACHMENT of THOUGHT' as the function."* 50

FORMLESSNESS means detachment from external objects, DETACHMENT from THOUGHT means detachment from The Single Internal Object, the concept of the Mind itself. NON-ATTACHMENT means detachment from both. At all times, in the past, present, or future, one's thinking must be kept free from all objects. As Hui-neng himself said:

"Non-attachment is the basis of our teaching."

When one's mind is attached neither to the external nor to the internal, one is enlightened and becomes a Buddha.

C. The Thirty-six Pairs of Opposites: A Teaching Technique

In 'The Final Lecture' Hui-neng says:-

"My Good and Learned friends, I am now leaving this world and going into Nirvāṇa in August. Therefore, I am giving you some guidance on preaching, so that you can keep up the tradition of our School. There are thirty-six pairs of opposites which divide into three categories;

Firstly:-

1. Heaven and earth
2. Sun and moon
3. Light and dark
4. Yin and Yang (Positive and Negative)
5. Fire and water

Secondly:- Twelve pairs with the appearance of things in language

1. Speech and Objects
2. Affirmation and Negation
3. Being and Non-being
4. Form and Formlessness
5. Stained and Unstained
6. Existence and Non-existence
7. Stillness and Motion
8. Purity and Impurity
9. Ordinary and Sages
10. The Clergy and the Laity
11. The Aged and the Young
12. The Big and Small

*50 CHTCC. Part II. 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch' Ch.IV, p.833.

Finally: Eighteen pairs to do with the function of the nature of the mind

1. Long and Short
2. Good and Evil
3. Deluded and Enlightened
4. Ignorant and Wise
5. Perturbed and Calm
6. Merciful and Cruel (Wicked)
7. Abstinent and Indulgent
8. Straightforward and Devious
9. Real and Apparent
10. Safe and Dangerous
11. Klesha and Bodhi (Affliction and Enlightenment)
12. Compassionate and Cruel
13. Permanent and Transient
14. Pleased and Angry
15. Generous and Mean
16. Birth and Death
17. ~~Forwards and Backwards~~
18. Sambhogakāya and Nirmāṇakāya (Spiritual-body and Physical-body)
19. Manifestation-body and Incarnation-body (of the Buddha)

He who knows how to use these Thirty-six pairs of opposites, realises the principles in all sutras. Whenever the questioner takes THIS side, you should stand on THAT side and cancel his attachment on THIS side by leading him over to you on THAT side. Likewise, if the questioner's delusive idea comes from THAT side, you guide him to transfer (transcend) his attachment to THIS side (you should transcend his attachment by guiding him over to THIS side). For instance, whenever a question is put to you, answer it in the negative. If you are asked about an ordinary man, tell the questioner something about a sage, and vice-versa. From the interdependence of the two opposites, the doctrine of the MEAN may be grasped and the way to Enlightenment may be reached. In this way you free the questioners from any attachment to any extreme.

*You should keep up the tradition of our School by using these Thirty-six pairs of Opposites."*⁵¹

*51 Ibid. Ch.X, pp.846-847

According to Hui-neng's fundamental point of 'Non-attachment' one can see that the one who best preaches the theory of Prajna sutras, never needs to persuade people to read the numerous sutras, neither is it necessary for him to lead followers step-by-step to the understanding of Prajñā, by means of classification of external objects.*⁵²

Hui-neng held fast to this principle, and applied it effectively to his teaching. It does not matter how many things or objects the follower was attached to in the past, or will be attached to in the future; all of these possible 'Attachments' are not important, and can be considered 'EMPTY' at the particular moment of questioning. The most important thing for the Ch'an master is to make sure of what is the follower's attachment, and to remove it, while the questioning is taking place. This is the key-point of Hui-neng's teaching technique.

This 'ATTACHING', 'DETACHING', and 'ENTERING' (into the state of Enlightenment) occur almost simultaneously in the minds of the student and the master. This is described as 'POINTING DIRECTLY' and 'INSTANT ENLIGHTENMENT'. The former indicates the teaching technique whilst the latter refers to the effect on the student.

In this teaching, words are used only for cancelling attachments or dispelling delusions, and when these have been detached or dispelled, the questioning and answering ceases automatically; words are no longer necessary. It does not matter if hundreds and thousands of words are used, or even only one word, as long as the questioner is guided into enlightenment. All words end in silence and the state of EMPTINESS is attained. If the master fails to detach the student's 'delusions' or the student fails to respond to instruction, he is not free from attachment, even a

*⁵² See Chapter I, Section B, of this thesis.

single word would be too much, and it would be simply a game of words. This is the basis of 'Wordlessness' of Ch'an (ZEN) teaching. This also reflects the influence of the 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' of Chinese thinking.

Hui-neng's 'Thirty-six pairs of opposites' are used only for breaking the attachment of those questioned. It is a technique of using words to cancel (discard) words (themselves), and is known as 'The Wordless Teaching' and can be seen throughout Hui-neng's lectures. Hui-neng said:-

"The nature of Bodhi (Enlightenment), is always within our minds; only if our minds are enlightened, do we reach the Buddhahood."*53

Thus, no outside help or words are really needed, and the record of his lecture says:-

"In the lecture hall of the Fa-hsing Monastery, there was a pennant blowing in the wind. Some of the audience claimed that the wind was causing the movement and others claimed that the pennant was moving of its own accord, an argument ensued. As the dispute could not be settled, Hui-neng interjected:

"It is neither the wind nor the pennant that is in motion, but our minds."

At once, the whole assembly was struck dumb, and there was no further argument."*54

By negating both sides of the argument, Hui-neng settled the dispute. A further example of this is illustrated:-

'The nun, Wu-chin-tsang, used to read The Mahā-parinirvāṇa Sūtra. One day she picked up this sutra and asked Hui-neng the pronunciation of certain words. Hui-neng replied:

"I do not know words. I am illiterate. But if you wish to know the profoundness of this sūtra, please ask."

The nun, surprised, said:

"How can you know and explain its profound meaning if you do not know the words?" Hui-neng answered calmly:

"The profundity of the Buddha's teaching has nothing to do with written words!"*55

By negating the question as an answer, Hui-neng twice attempted to remove the attachments from the nun's mind. He considered that the principle itself is beyond words. Words are only used to indicate the principle.

*53 CHTCC. Part II, 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch' Ch.I, p.824

*54 Ibid. p.827

*55 Ibid. Ch.VII, p.837.

As has been mentioned before, there are two stanzas in the Sutra:-

1. Shen-hsiu: "Our body is the tree of Bodhi,
And our minds are like a bright mirror.
Carefully, we wipe them from time to time,
Lest dust should fall upon them."*56
2. Hui-neng: "Bodhi has never had any tree,
Nor is there any bright mirror.
Since from the very beginning,
there has been only non-being,
Whereon then, can any dust fall?"*57

Using the same words as Shen-hsiu, but taking an opposite line, Hui-neng discarded Shen-hsiu's words, and as a result, his own words at the same time. As Hui-neng considered that principle is beyond words, his technique (without using words) is partly based on this.

D. The Emphasis On Practice In Daily Life

Hui-neng's teaching technique is also based on the native idea of 'The Mind'. Chinese traditional 'Practical Thought' usually puts ethical principles into practice in daily life. This can be seen in the same sutra as follows:-

'Hui-neng said: "When Mahāyānists heard about the Diamond Sūtra, they instantaneously became enlightened. They know that the principles of sūtras and pure understanding are imminent in the nature of their own minds, and they need not rely on any written words or sculptural authorities as a means to enlightenment. They can make use of their own wisdom to see things as they are."*58

'Hui-neng said: "All sūtras, both Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna, and the twelve sections of the Tripiṭaka (Sutras) are provided to serve the different needs and the temperaments of various people. It is because Prajñā (Pure Understanding) is imminent in everyone that these books were written. If there were no human beings (to be served) there would be no sutras (to be needed). We thus know that all sūtras and canonical writings were written for people. As some are wise, they are called 'Superior' and some are ignorant, they are called 'Inferior'. The ignorant asks questions and seek the answers from the wise. The wise instruct the ignorant who become enlightened and their minds are opened. Consequently, the ignorant and wise come together. Oh! my Good and Learned friends, delusions prevent an ordinary man from becoming a Buddha. A Buddha is an ordinary man who has got rid of his delusions. Therefore, our mind is the essence of all things natural.

*56 See '16' and '17'

*57 See '16' and '17'

*58 CHTCC. Part II, 'The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch' Ch.II, p.829

Therefore it is seen that all things are imminent in one's own mind. So why do we not seek in our mind to understand its nature, and so become a Buddha?"

The P'u-sa Chieh-ching says: "The nature of our minds is naturally pure. If we become aware of this, we fully achieve Buddhahood."

The Wei-mo Chieh-ching says: "In an instant we become completely enlightened and discover our true origin of the Mind."*59

The 'Mind' (or the nature of the Mind) and its realisation (Enlightenment) are the only subject with which Hui-neng and his School were concerned. All words were merely secondary and indirect means to enlightenment.

In contrast to 'discarding words', the practice of 'Mind' in daily life is also emphasised in the Ch'an School. In the Sutra, Hui-neng says:-

"Those who merely repeat the word 'Prajñā' the whole day long, do not know that 'Prajna' is inherent in the nature of their minds. They are exactly like one who merely talks all day of eating food but never actually eats any, and stays hungry. ... My dear Good and Learned friends, we might talk on 'Prajna' for hundreds and thousands of years, but doing so, would never enable our minds to become enlightened. My dear Good and Learned friends, 'Mahā-Prajñāpramitā' is Sanskrit and means 'Great Wisdom' (or Pure-Understanding). The most important thing to do is to put it into practice within our minds. It does not matter whether we talk about it or not. Merely to talk about it repeatedly without actually practising it, is a phantasy, a delusion, a flash of lightning, or a dewdrop. It has nothing to do with Enlightenment. If we not only talk about it but put it into practice, then our minds will be in accordance with our speech. The true nature of our minds is Buddha, and only there can Buddha be found."*60

We can see that what is emphasised is 'Practice' and that 'Words' are to be ignored.

In the same sutra, Hui-neng says:-

"My Good and Learned friends, what the ignorant merely talk about, wise men put into practice with their minds. My Learned and Good friends, 'Prajna' comes from our minds and not from an external source. If we know our minds, we will be free from delusion forever. ... Do not talk about the 'Emptiness' of Prajñā without practising it within the Mind. ... "*61

*59 Ibid. Ch.II, p.830

*60 Ibid. p.828

*61 Ibid. p.828

"Learned and Good friends, people under illusion recite the word 'Mahā-prajñāparamitā' with their tongues. While they are reciting it, erroneous and evil thoughts can arise; but if they put it into practice, they would find the true nature of their minds. One who knows this principle, knows the principle of Prajñā. One who practices this, is practising Prajñā (theory). One who directs his mind to practise it even for one instant, is no different from the Buddha."*62

"The Three Bodhis (Three kinds of Enlightenment), are inherent in the nature of our minds, and by their development, the four kinds of wisdom are manifest. Thus, without shutting your eyes and ears to keep out the external world, you can go straight to Buddhahood. Now that I have made this plain, believe in it firmly, if you want to be free from delusion. Follow not those who seek enlightenment from without, the ones' who talk about 'Bodhi' all the time."*63

In the foregoing, 'Words' and 'Practice' are brought together to be dealt with within the Mind. Again 'Words' tend to be discarded whilst 'Practice' is emphasised and respected. The Chief point of all sayings is that 'The Enlightenment of the Mind' depends on 'Practice' within the Mind; no talk or words are necessary.

Hui-neng's whole doctrine of the Mind discipline is developed from the thinking of the Prajñā. He aimed at discarding 'Words' by using 'Opposite Words' as an answer to free the questioner from his attachment of the moment. He also strongly emphasised 'Practice' in the Mind in daily life. These are the two key-points constituting Hui-neng's teaching of the Mind.

As Hui-neng's teaching concentrated on 'The nature of the Mind' instead of 'The nature of Things' as in Indian Buddhism, it not only went back to the Confucianist way of thinking on 'The nature of the Mind', but also avoided all the complex and interminable analyses of the 'Emptiness' of the myriad of things in nature. In this doctrine, only one's own 'Mind' is important, very little attention is paid to 'Words': Here, lies the characteristic of 'Wordless Teaching'.

*62 Ibid. p.829

*63 Ibid. Ch.III, p.839

Again, as Hui-neng's doctrine of the Mind started from Prajna thought, and then came back to the way of Chinese thinking, producing the idea of 'Emptiness of the nature of the Mind', this teaching of 'The nature of the Mind' is different from the Confucianist idea that 'The Nature of men is basically good!'^{#64} and the doctrine of 'The true nature of the Mind' of the T'ien-t'ai School.^{#65} Hui-neng's 'MIND' is neither good nor evil, and neither pure nor impure. This originated from the doctrine of 'Gainlessness' (or the idea of unattainable nature) of Prajna, which discards extremes.^{#66} The 'Mind' of the Confucianists is one which practises Confucianist ethic and tries to identify with that of the sages; whereas, Hui-seng's 'MIND' aims at 'Non-attachment' which means being free from all obstacles to the state of Buddhahood.

Moreover, in the teaching of 'The Mind Discipline' in the T'ien-t'ai School, individual 'Concentration and Insight' is aimed at;^{#67} but Hui-neng's technique of 'Thirty-six Pairs of Opposites' aims at freeing the questioner from attachments at the particular moment he faces the master in a duel of words. Prajñā's features of 'Gainlessness' (or the unattainable nature) and the 'Double Truth'^{#68} are thus shown to be another basic teaching of Hui-neng's doctrine.

The technical method of 'Question and Answer' in Hui-neng's discipline is taken directly from the teaching of Confucius, and is rarely found in Indian Buddhism. Hui-neng also discarded words by using opposite 'Words' thus cancelling the questioner's attachments of the moment. This method reflects the T'ien-t'ai School's ideas about 'Wordlessness of Words' and 'Words of Wordlessness'.^{#69}

Furthermore, 'The Thirty-six Pairs of Opposites' are a means of cancelling a question by giving an opposite answer. The words of the

^{#64} See Chapter II, Section A, of this thesis

^{#65} Ibid. Ch.V, Section 'C'

^{#66} Ibid. Ch.I, Section 'B'

^{#67} See '65'

^{#68} See '66' and Ch.IV, Section 'E' of this thesis.

^{#69} See '65'

opposite statement automatically discard themselves and the words of the question simultaneously. This 'discarding words' reflects the idea of the T'ien-t'ai School about the 'Wordlessness of Words'.^{*70}

As 'Mind-discipline', 'Instantaneousness' and 'Directness' are stressed by Hui-neng, words are considered as of secondary importance. Direct and indirect means are themselves cancelled when the goal of Enlightenment is reached. According to this theory of 'Non-attachment', 'Words' are one of the attachments which have to be abandoned when the ideal state of Buddhahood is arrived at. Ultimately, the doctrine of the Ch'an School is transmitted by the master and received by the student 'Without the use of Words'.

As a result of this method, the later masters of this School during the Sung Dynasty were inspired to become enlightened, even by the light of a lamp, by the song of a bird, or by the sound of the wind; ... such are the voice and words of the Buddha. In this way, they received the 'Words' without words, and the sounds of nature were as words to them, no other form of communication was necessary. The later techniques used by the Five Branches^{*71} - such as shouting and hitting with a stick, can also be considered as forms of 'Words' (or as Wordlessness of Words), reflecting the idea of the 'Wordlessness of Words' of the T'ien-t'ai School.^{*72}

This teaching of Hui-neng became deeply inground into the minds of his followers, so much so, that they applied them to everything in their daily lives.

Hui-neng adopted the use of words, but at the same time, he considered that things are words in themselves. This attitude towards both words and wordlessness was also frequently taken by Confucius in his teaching.^{*73}

*70 See '65'

*71 See '12'

*72 See '65'

*73 See '64'

To conclude, by synthesizing the doctrine of Prajñā with Confucianism, and the ideas of the T'ien-t'ai School, Hui-neng drew together various strains of thought, thus establishing an approach to the achievement of Buddhahood, which best suited the Chinese mind. This also brought Chinese native thinking on 'The nature of the Mind' to a further development; Hui-neng's 'Thirty-six Pairs of Opposites' for 'Mind-discipline' reduced all the complex, endless, analytical treatises and explanations of Indian Buddhism into the simple and wordless expression of Chinese thinking. As a result, because of Hui-neng, 'Simplicity' and 'Silence' in Chinese Buddhism reached its highest peak.

Nearly seven hundred years had elapsed between the first introduction of Buddhism into China and the time of Hui-neng. Buddhism eventually 'flowed into the current' of native thinking, and became part of Chinese culture. Hui-neng's approach also formed the basis of Neo-Confucianism, which appeared in the Sung Dynasty.*⁷⁴

At the height of popularity of the Ch'an School, Confucianists began to realise that their own culture seemed to have been conquered by Indian Buddhism, and had, apparently, been losing ground for nearly seven hundred years. A clamour arose:

"We must resuscitate the ruined doctrine of the sages, so that for countless generations the Empire will be at peace."*⁷⁵

These words of Chu-hsi, showed their point of view. In the T'ang Dynasty, Han-yü said:

"The Tao (doctrine) of our former kings was transmitted to Shun by Yao, to Yü by Shun, to T'ang by Yü, to Chou-Wen-Wang by T'ang, to Chou Wu-wang by Chou-Wen-wang, to Chou-Kung by Chou Wu-wang, to Confucius by Chou-kung, and to Mencius from Confucius. After the death of Mencius it was not passed on to anyone else."*⁷⁶

*⁷⁴ See '77'

*⁷⁵ KSCPTSSPC. 046. 朱子語類 (The Sayings of Chu-hsi), Part II, p.281

*⁷⁶ KSCPTSSPC. 269. Han Yü (768-824 A.D.), Han Ch'ang-li Ch'üan-chi, Yüan-tao P'ien (On the Origin of Tao), X. p.663. 韓昌黎全集. 原道篇.

From this sentence we can see that, Han Yü considered it his duty to carry on the teaching of Mencius and that of Confucius. It is also clear that he considered that Indian Buddhism had conquered China.

If the final stage of the Sinicization of Buddhism had not been completed by Hui-neng and his School, would these scholars have made such a cry from their hearts; and would Neo-Confucianism have been born?*

Could it be the case that after such a long time, a foreign culture had been completely Sinicized, or had Chinese culture been conquered by Indian Buddhism? Who was the conqueror and who were the conquered? Is 'conquest' to be the only theme to be considered in the history of a culture? If this is the case, the argument of the thesis proves that Buddhism had become completely Sinicized. The true victory was therefore the modifying influence of Chinese native thought, resulting in the development of Ch'an Buddhism and so giving birth to Neo-confucianism.

*⁷⁷ Some modern scholars of Chinese philosophy, Fung Yu-lan., Hou Wai-lu, et, alia, have also taken the view-point that Neo-Confucianism was inspired, and given birth to, by the teachings of Hui-neng and his School; other scholars, Hsiung Shih-li, T'ang Chün-i, and Mou Tsung-san, assert that Neo-Confucianism in the Sung Dynasty was straight from Pre-ch'in Confucianism, and had little to do with Buddhism. cf. T'ang Chün-i, 'The Development of Chinese Philosophy', III, pp. 1390-1408 and IV; Fung Yu-lan.'s 'A History of Chinese Philosophy' Ch.X, pp.800-809, Ch.XIII, pp.895-924; Hou Wai-lu, et, alia, 'A General History of Chinese Thought' IV, pp.344-346, 571, 574, 579, 584; Yen chi-yi, 'Chung-kuo Che-nsüch Shin Chien-pien', Ch.VI, pp.349, 353, 356-357.

EPILOQUE

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The Teaching of the Buddha.

Confucianism and Taoism.

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The Burning of the Classics.

The Mahāyāna School.

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INTRODUCTION

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DOMESTICATION

Kumārajīva's successful translations.

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2. The first clarification and simplification of Buddhist thought in China.

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The T'ien-t'ai School

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2. The establishment of the theory of Chinese Mind-discipline.
3. The emphasis on the practice of Concentration and Insight.

The Hua-yen School

1. The emphasis on the practice of 'Totality of Buddhahood'.

The Pure Land School

1. The reduction of written and spoken principles into one phrase.
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The Ch'an School

1. The abandonment of verbal and written preaching.
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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

A. EDITIONS OF THE TRIPITAKA.

B. DICTIONARIES.

- C. WORKS IN THE TRIPITAKA: (i) Sūtras and Sāstras
(ii) Treatises, commentaries and other references.

D. CHINESE CLASSICS

- E. MODERN WORKS: (i) In Chinese
(ii) In other languages

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